

At Evangelism Conference

Wheeler Grove youths "set on fire"

By Anne Washburn McWilliams

"We went to the Youth Evangelism Conference and it set us on fire!" said Scott Benjamin, eighth grader at Kossuth High School and member of Wheeler Grove Baptist Church in Alcorn County.

Young people of Wheeler Grove are sharing their Christianity through early morning devotional services they set up in two schools; through teaching in Children's Church; and through personal witnessing. "Christianity is something genuine with these kids," said Gregg Thomas, associate pastor there since April 1980.

Wheeler Grove, organized in 1909, is in a fast growing rural community, six miles from Corinth, between Biggersville and Kossuth. It has 480 resident members. In the past year the number of young people enrolled in the youth department has grown from 14 to 60. Since October, 1980, at least 30 teenagers have joined this church by profession of faith or by letter. Said Ed Settle, vocational agriculture teacher at Biggersville High School and



Tammy Allen and Jay Baker beam their joy at being new Christians. They are students at Biggersville High School and members of Wheeler Grove Church.

deacon at Wheeler Grove, "They are leading others to Christ. I teach a Sunday School class of young people and it gives me a spiritual lift just to be with them on Sunday mornings. Two young men pick me up for visitation on Wednesday afternoons — instead of my picking them up! They lead out."

He added, "For a long time the adults of the church have wanted to see the youth program grow like this." The church has a five-year-old gym, and until last year the youth activities involved mostly recreation. Thomas set up a new program, and worked with the church in setting new goals.



Ed Settle, teacher at Biggersville High School, Wheeler Grove deacon said, "It gives me a spiritual lift just to be with the young people on Sunday mornings!"

At the close of a three-day youth retreat last summer he challenged the youths. "Do you want to see 50 in our youth program? Are you willing to commit yourself totally to reaching that goal?" Seventeen answered yes. That led first to the start of devotionals (Continued on page 5)



Leaders in devotionals at Kossuth School talk with Gregg Thomas, associate pastor at Wheeler Grove. Left to right are Thomas, Jeff Bonds, Scott Benjamin, Mike Bonds, and Ray Morton.

Missionaries stay in Lebanon but draw up evacuation plans

BEIRUT, Lebanon (BP) — Southern Baptist missionaries in Lebanon have drawn up contingency plans for evacuation following more than a month of intense fighting between Christian and Muslim factions, according to missionary Emmett Barnes.

Although the mission (organization of Southern Baptist missionaries) agreed on danger levels that should prompt evacuation, the decision to leave will rest with individuals, reported Barnes, mission chairman. All

have opted to remain thus far, he said.

In a phone conversation earlier, Mrs. Barnes said the Baptist school and other schools in Beirut had reopened despite continued fighting. The Baptist school closed when it became dangerous to transport children in school buses, but later the buses were able to take longer routes to avoid danger areas.

A few shells have gone over her house, Mrs. Barnes said, and it has been very noisy in the downtown area but the missionaries are "all OK."

Blue piece of paper held "God's plans"

By Tim Nicholas

Immediately after Jim Henry was elected president of the SBC Pastors' Conference last year, he mentioned to the Baptist Record that God had already given him a plan for the upcoming conference in 1981.

It was on a blue piece of paper in his desk. The previous January at the Florida Evangelism Conference, he had jotted down on the program some ideas concerning what he would do if he were ever in charge of the Pastors' Conference.

"I wrote that I would like to have a program where I would emphasize the pastor and building his walk with God," said Henry, pastor of First Baptist Church, Orlando, Fla. Other points on the paper were the pastor and his leadership, dealing with spiritual warfare, and building an evangelistic and missionary church.

He took as the overall theme, "We

would see Jesus," breaking down the sessions into focuses on the pastor's home, his ministry, the church, and the world.

He said that the testimonies which are set should offer the pastors special help in their ministries. For instance, he said Ras Robinson will talk about how he became burdened for the lost and James Mahoney, who lost a daughter in a tragic accident, will talk about heartache.

He also noted that the seminary presidents enthusiastically responded when invited to give their personal testimonies.

Henry said he does not plan to make any direct statements about any controversy which may erupt during the convention. "I hope that we'll focus on Christ and the church and the things that tie us together," said Henry. "If we'll get busy about those things, we won't have time to worry about those others."

Mississippi seminary student helps life

By Robbie N. Watson

NEW ORLEANS — John Voss, a lawyer from Jackson, Miss., and a student at New Orleans Seminary says he

just happened to be in the right place at the right time recently when he helped talk a New Orleans man out of taking his own life.

Voss was returning from a special field education project at Charity Hospital when he noticed a policeman on the ground talking to a man perched on the edge of a seven story parking garage. When he learned that the man was threatening suicide Voss offered his help as a minister.

This was a remarkable turn of events because the man only wanted to

talk to a chaplain. When the policeman learned that Voss was a seminary student he told the man on the roof and the negotiations began.

Voss was able to persuade city police not to file charges against the man if he would come down. The man, who was depressed and despondent,

being able to find a job and other personal problems, was promised some help from local charitable agencies and surrendered to Voss and the city policemen on the roof.

Psychiatrists later told Voss that the man was not suicidal, but was extremely depressed.

"He was feeling a lot better after we had talked. I gave him my name and phone number and told him to let me know if he needed anything," said Voss. "He said that everybody involved had been extremely helpful and he was grateful for our help."

Johnson, Kellum, Blount named to home missions



Johnson



Kellum

ATLANTA — Charlotte Johnson, native of Meridian, James Kellum, Jr., of Canton, and Bernard Blount, native of Canton, along with his wife, Louise, were among 75 missionaries commissioned by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board during services at Prays Mill Baptist Church near Douglasville, Ga., recently. Those commissioned come from 22 different states and eight other countries.

Johnson is a missionary associate serving as director of Christian social ministries for Lauderdale Baptist Association in Mississippi. She is a graduate of Meridian Junior College and University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg.

Kellum serves as a catalytic missionary to Asians in Shelby Baptist



Bernard and Louise Blount

Association, Memphis, Tenn., and is a graduate of Mississippi College in Clinton.

Blount is a missionary associate serving as a regional director in Florida.

The Home Mission Board holds commissioning services twice each year in connection with orientation of new missionaries. Almost all of the 75 missionaries commissioned are already serving in their positions of responsibilities.

Exemption in danger

Intervention gives church tax status defense voice

By Tim Nicholas

Clarksdale Baptist Church, Rep. Trent Lott of Mississippi, and Sen. Jesse Helms of North Carolina, have been allowed to intervene in a case involving the tax exempt status of the church's school.

Intervention was granted last week by federal Judge George L. Hart in Washington, D.C.

The reason the church sought intervention was to have a chance to argue the merits of the Green v. Regan case which could result in disallowing tax exemptions for church contributions, since the school operated by Clarksdale Baptist Church is an integral part of the ministry of the church. The case began 10 years ago at Green v. Miller (the name changes as the treasurer of the United States changes). That case barred discrimination by race in private schools.

For the present, the Internal Revenue Service says it plans to lift tax exemptions for donations to schools which discriminate according to their

This intervention in effect gives the Clarksdale church a chance to argue that ruling.

Said Clarksdale Baptist Church Pas-

tor, Lucius Marion, "if tax exemption can be used to regulate or control the ministry of the church, then they can do so not only in the area of Christian education, but in any area that does not adhere to federal public policy."

What the Clarksdale church is fighting, according to school trustee chairman David Gladden, is an IRS order, stemming from the original case, that requires Christianschools to supply information to the IRS to enable the IRS to determine if those Christian schools are discriminatory. "If they are judged discriminatory," the IRS could "take away the tax exempt status of the schools or the organizations operating the schools," said Gladden. "Since our school is not separately incorporated and is an integral part of the ministry of our church — in fact, our church faces the threat of possibly losing our tax exempt status."

The Clarksdale Baptist Church School has 384 students from kindergarten through 9th grade. The principal, Mark Wofford, has a specialist's degree in education, all teachers are state certified, and the school is accredited.

Said Marion, "the purpose of our

school is to win people to the Lord and to mature them in discipleship."

Students attend chapel twice a week. There is a 30 minute Bible study in all elementary grades every day and a full period of Bible study in junior high grades.

In one chapel service last fall—not during a revival, according to Marion, he gave a brief gospel message and an invitation with 39 young people accepting Christ. He noted that the first and second grades were excluded from the service.

Marion said that on the advice of their attorney, they have advertised a non-discriminatory policy, although they feel they have not discriminated. Said Marion, "No child has ever been

denied admission to this school because of race."

The Associated Press reported that the Clarksdale church's lawyer, William Ball defended the school as "a group that believes its civil liberties are threatened." The judge commented, "You can't use religion as a basis for trying to avoid desegregation of schools... when you start claiming that teaching children two times two is four is religious training—that seems to me to be silly."

But Ball replied, "Your own religious judgment ought not to prevail in this case."

Hart agreed that he might be right and that the church in intervention will set a hearing date after they file papers in the case.

Children's home group refuses filing IRS form

BREWSTER, Tenn. (BP)

nessee Baptist Children's Homes Inc. has gained the support of the state Baptist convention executive board in its contest with the Internal Revenue Service over Form 990.

The IRS insists the Children's Homes, an agency of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, file the form which lists all sources and income expenditures. The agency has "respectfully refused" on the grounds that it receives no funds from federal or state governments and that all information requested is available from other sources.

The basic issue is whether the Children's Homes are an "integrated auxiliary" of the churches as defined by IRS, according to Evans Bowen, the Homes' executive director.

Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes was notified April 9 it would be assessed a financial penalty for its refusal to file Form 990. Its trustees have asked for an administrative hearing. Pending the outcome of that hearing, it will file an appeal in federal district court.

In a motion passed by the Tennessee Baptist Convention executive board, the members voted to "reiterate its position with separation of church and state by taking such actions as are necessary to retaining legal counsel, to support the refusal of Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes Inc. to file Form 990."

Frank Ingraham, Children's Homes attorney, told the executive board its action will affirm that the board, acting as the state convention ad interim, recognizes the ministry to children as performing the work of the state convention.

James Dunn, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs in Washington, D.C., said he believes this is the first such case to come from a Baptist state convention organization's refusal to file Form 990. He said the case presents a "fundamental church-state issue."

expressed concern about the possible cost, since special constitutional attorneys would be retained and the case could go all the way to the Supreme Court.

Raymond Boston, pastor of First Baptist Church, Dyersburg, said, "We would be derelict as an executive board if we did not vote to participate. This is a principle that is worth whatever it costs." The 100-member board approved the motion with one dissenting vote.

Baptist hits TV homosexual

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — A Southern Baptist family specialist is challenging NBC's plans to air a prime-time situation comedy this fall featuring actor Tony Randall as a homosexual.

According to reports in the New York Times and United Press International, the program "Love, Sidney" will air on Wednesday evenings and will feature Randall as an aging homosexual who befriends a young girl and helps raise her son born out of wedlock. The series is based on the pilot film "Sidney Shore."

Harry Hollis Jr., director of family and special moral concerns for the

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Nonprofit postage increase is likely

By Larry Chesser

WASHINGTON (BP) — Baptist state newspapers and agency publications, and other nonprofit mailers, appear headed for severe postage increases in October.

It is apparently now a question of how severe the hikes will be.

A spokesman for the House Committee on Post Office and Civil Service told Baptist Press some cuts are "likely" in the subsidy which allows nonprofit organizations to move gradually from partial to full postage rates.

The proposed cut, already recommended by the Senate Government Affairs Committee, would eliminate the

final six years of a 16-year plan implemented by Congress to cushion the impact of requiring nonprofit mailers to pay full rates for mailing their publications.

The House Committee recently held two days of hearings to examine what Chairman William B. Ford, D-Mich., described as "the implications of President Reagan's proposal to make major spending reductions in postal appropriations."

Both the House and the Senate already have approved the president's overall budget spending limits for fiscal year 1982, but individual committee are now in the process of recom-

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Board faces cost realities, returns hospital to Anglicans

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board decided in its May meeting it can no longer afford to operate the financially pressured Baptist Hospital in Gaza.

Board members voted \$170,000 to keep the hospital open until Jan. 1, 1982, when it will be returned to an Anglican administration. The Anglicans' Church Missionary Society of England had operated the hospital before Southern Baptists took it over in 1954.

Southern Baptist missionaries will be allowed to continue working at the hospital after the property is handed

over to the Anglican Diocese of Jerusalem as the representative of the church missionary society.

But the board voted to keep operating the 60-student Baptist School of Health Sciences, adjacent to the hospital. Students in the school will receive their clinical training in the hospital. Last year 13 students made decisions to accept Christ as savior.

The agreement with the Anglicans, worked out earlier in Gaza by the hospital's board of trustees and Foreign Mission Board representatives, also permits a Baptist witness to continue in the hospital and through a church that meets there.

Help Wanted

Volunteers skilled in laying concrete blocks are needed to help Riverside Baptist Church at Monticello build its new building. Contact Eugene Myers, a lay member of Newhebron Baptist Church, who is donating time and skills to supervise construction. He is at Newhebron, Miss., 39140, phone 694-2245.

Southern Baptist synthesis: Is it cracking, reshaping?

By Walter B. Shurden

Never in the last 25 years have I felt so deeply the urgency of history for the life of our denomination. Knowing our heritage is no longer a plaything; it has become an imperative thing. Forces and factors are loose in our denomination and our society which make awareness of heritage a necessity, not a luxury. To put it bluntly, we

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are facing the erosion of a rich denominational heritage which cannot be preserved by ignoring our heritage. We must receive it all. We must confess and forgive much of it. But, above all, we must know it.

During the 18th and 19th centuries at least four distinct traditions among Baptists of the South helped shape the Southern Baptist synthesis.

The Charleston tradition
Charleston, S.C., in the 18th century was the hub of Baptist activity. Organized in the late 17th century, the First Baptist Church of Charleston was the first church in the South, and from its influence in 1751 came the Charleston Association — the first Baptist association of the South.

The tradition was rooted in the Particular Baptists of England, who in turn were rooted in English Calvinistic Puritanism. At the heart of it were two central affirmations which were bequeathed to Charleston. One was the centrality of religious experience; the second was the sole authority of holy scripture.

The Charleston Tradition, personified in Richard Furman, may be summarized in one word, and that word is order. Charleston provided theological order. In 1767 the Charleston Association adapted and adopted the Philadelphia Confession of Faith. Calvinistic in character, that confession became a consensus of Baptist theology in the South. While it was a confession which expressed a Baptist consensus, it was never intended as a creed to bind a Baptist conscience. That part of our heritage, it appears, will have to be relearned.

Charleston alone provided ecclesiastical order. "A Summary of Church Discipline" was adopted by the Charleston Association. This early church manual insisted upon the independence of the local churches. But it avoided "lone rangerism" in church discipline, demanding the demand for local church independency with a call for cooperation in associational life. Southern Baptist connectionalism in denominational polity comes from Furman through W. B. Johnson. Cooperation was a key.

And then there was liturgical order. It represented a style in public worship that was ordered and stately, though pulsating with evangelical warmth. The ordinances were more important to these 18th century Baptists than to many of their successors. Worship appeared to be neither spontaneously charismatic nor primarily revivalistic. It was directed toward heaven, not earth. The object was to praise God, not entertain people.

Finally, the Charleston Tradition emphasized ministerial order. The very first educational fund promoted and supported by a group of Baptists in America was initiated by the Charleston Association in 1755. Charleston never demanded education as a prerequisite to ministry, but neither did they demean it.

From this pro-educational, non-anti-intellectual Charleston sentiment were born Baptist colleges. And the roots of Southern Baptists' first theological seminary are clearly traced to the Charleston Tradition.

In brief, the Charleston Tradition consisted of pietistic Puritanism, Calvinistic connectionalism, churchly liturgics, and a commitment to an educated ministry. I would dub these folk "semi-presbyterians." The word for Charleston is order.

The Sandy Creek tradition

The second word in the Southern Baptist synthesis is ardor. These were the separate Baptists, much that is distinctive in Southern Baptist life can be traced directly to the Separate Baptist heritage. Coming out of New England revivalism during the era of the Great Awakening, these fiery frontier folk migrated to the South and settled in Sandy Creek, N.C., in 1755. They were a people possessed by ardor. And that ardor expressed itself in individualism, congregationalism, biblicism, and egalitarianism. They released a devotion to freedom which is without parallel in Baptist history.

Because they wanted religious freedom to evangelize every soul who crossed their path, they rejected any infringement from the state in matters of faith. The result? The walls of the Southern establishment in matters of church-state came tumbling down.

Because they wanted ecclesiastical freedom for the local church, they tended to be suspicious of associational authority. Because they wanted theological freedom for the individual conscience, they were reluctant to pledge themselves to confessions of faith.

Four characteristics of Separate Baptist ardor: First, their worship was revivalistic. Stubby Stearnes and company were a highly emotional, deeply pietistic kind of people. They had one value: winning people to Jesus Christ and to an emotionally indelible experience. Faith was feeling and every Sunday was a camp meeting. Their praise of God was not vertical but horizontal. Unlike the city-slickers at Charleston, they didn't praise God by praising God; they praised God by reaching women and men. They had a mourner's bench and they expected public groaning, not polite amens. They were ardent revivalists.

Second, their ministry was charismatic. The call of God to preach, like the conversion which preceded it, was internal and experiential, never a professional choice. Ministerial education was not encouraged but discouraged. Their preachers were not out to educate but to alarm. And their preaching was marked by "a holy whine."

Third, their ecclesiology was ruggedly independent. They formed associations, their first being the Sandy Creek in 1758. But unlike the Charleston Tradition, the Sandy Creek Tradition did not spend as much time defining associational authority as they did declaring local church autonomy. The Separate Baptist concept of connectionalism did not contribute to a later Southern Baptist centralized denominational structure. Rather, you find here some roots of later Landmarkism.

Fourth, their theological approach was biblicistic. With a highly literalistic approach to scripture, they found not two but nine Christian rites in the Bible. Their biblicism is what made them so ardently opposed to confessions of faith. Their background was New England Congregationalism where non-binding confessions had evolved into binding creeds. And they had watched the creeds become substitutes for the authority of the word of God. They would have none of that. For years, therefore, different postures toward confessional statements kept the Charleston and Sandy Creek Traditions from merging.

In brief, the Sandy Creek Tradition consisted of revivalistic experientialism, anti-connectionalism, exaggerated localism, fierce libertarianism, and a commitment to personal evangelism. I would dub these people "semi-pentecostals." A suggestion: if you marry a semi-presbyterian from Charleston to a semi-pentecostal from Sandy Creek, you will get a whole host of Southern Baptists spreading all over the Southland. That's what happened. Beginning in 1777 in North Carolina and continuing until 1801 in Kentucky, the Charlestonians and the Sandy Creekers began coming together. Together they formed the Southern Baptist Convention and the blending helped shape the Southern Baptist synthesis.

The Georgia tradition
The Georgia Tradition is understood by pointing to Augusta and Atlanta. And there are two Baptist leaders who personify this tradition. W. B. Johnson, first president of the Southern Baptist Convention, and I. T. Tichenor, the leader of the Home Mission Board who helped to forge a Southern Baptist consciousness in the despairing denominational days of the post Civil War. The words for the Georgia Tradition are "local color."

Arriving in Augusta on May 8, 1845, W. B. Johnson had in his pocket a proposed constitution for the about-to-be-formed Southern Baptist Convention. After the convention convened, a "Public Address" was drafted to explain why the Southern Baptist Convention was being organized. Johnson wrote the address. Two ideas dominated those two documents. The ideas were denominationalism and sectionalism. These ideas have provided for Southern Baptists much of their local color through the history of the convention. Southern Baptists have not always spoken with candor on why the convention was formed. We have often smoke-screened this part of our heritage. Theological differences between Baptists North and South had nothing to do with the denominational division.

The issue was slavery which was a part of the larger issue of a growing sectionalism in the country. Following the invention of the cotton gin, Baptists of the South became Southern Baptists, a people who for years to come would defend the Southern way of life. But, that defense would begin cracking in the 1950's. Here is a part of our heritage which we must receive and confess and forgive.

The organization of the Southern Baptist Convention was also colored by cooperative denominationalism. As often pointed out by historians, Southern Baptists formed in 1845 a new kind of denominational structure; one that was more connectional, more centralized and more cooperative than

any heretofore known among Baptists. They forsook the decentralized, societal approach of the North and formed one convention with two boards, home and foreign, which were accountable to the one convention.

What would cement this new denominationalism? What would hold it together? Would it be theological and creedal? And the answer was given: "We have constructed for our basis no new creeds; acting in this manner upon a Baptist aversion for all creeds but the Bible." Southern Baptists waited 80 years to adopt their first confession, and then only reluctantly and under pressure. When they adopted the confession of 1925, however, a crack appeared in the anti-confessional posture of the SBC.

If the new denomination was not to be united by theological uniformity, then by what? Article two of the Constitution answered forthrightly: "It shall be the design of this convention to promote Foreign and Domestic Missions, and other important objects connected with the Redeemer's kingdom." They were organizing a plan, as the Preamble to the constitution states, "... for eliciting, combining and directing the energies of the whole denomination in one sacred effort, for the propagation of the gospel..."

Denominationalism and sectionalism were at the root of formation of the convention

Cooperation was the method. Missions "and other important objects connected with the Redeemer's kingdom" was the motive. That was what happened at Augusta.

The ideas of sectionalism and denominationalism were intensified by I. T. Tichenor in 1882. In that year he became the Executive - Secretary of a crippled Home Mission Board, and moved it from Marion, Ala., to Atlanta, Ga. In order to save the board from an imminent death, Tichenor had to do two things. He had to guarantee Southern Baptists' allegiance to the Southern Board by breaking their support for the Northern Board Home Missions Society which was more influential and affluent. He did so by appealing to Southerners' sectionalism. Also, he had to persuade Southern Baptists to work through a central denominational mission board rather than through the increasingly powerful state convention boards. He did so by pointing to the value of a cooperative denominationalism. He was successful in both cases.

So the Georgia Tradition colored the SBC with an intense sectionalism and a devout cooperative denominationalism. For years the sectionalism restricted us in both our relationship with Blacks and our outreach beyond the confederacy. Our denominationalism, however, provided a cooperation between churches and the convention which should explain part of the genius of the SBC.

The Tennessee tradition
J. R. Graves is the central figure in the Tennessee Tradition. Landmarkism was the movement. And Nashville and Memphis, the respective homes of Graves, were the places. To describe this tradition, so powerful in its impact on the synthesis, let's use the words "questionable honor."

Landmarkism, with its emphasis on local church successionism and the exclusive validity of Baptist churches, Baptist ministers, and Baptist ordinances, gave to Southern Baptists a claim to fame as being the only ones God had. Over against the restorationism of the Campbellites and the pedobaptism of the Methodists and Presbyterians, Landmarkism gave to Southern Baptists a "trail of blood" which said the oldest is the best. The assumption was that longevity validates truth. Much of our anti-ecumenism and almost all of our sectarianism may be traced to the Tennessee Tradition. In other words, Landmarkism gave us an identity based on a fallacious history. By the turn of the 20th century, Southern Baptists were being told it was not so. Cracks in the Landmark structure continued in the 20th century and even to this day create something of an identity crisis for some Southern Baptists.

By 1900 this Southern Baptist goulash had been mixed and stirred and looked something like this:

The Charleston Tradition had poured into the bowl order, which provided denominational connectionalism, a theological consensus, and, while never neglecting evangelism, facilitated ministerial education as an important object of the Redeemer's kingdom. Charleston provided leadership and stability for an emerging denomination and gave us a churchly identity.

The Sandy Creek Tradition contributed ardor, which provided revivalistic momentum, an adventuresome spirit and a love for liberty. It gave us an evangelistic identity.

The "Southernness" of the Gospel Tradition gave us a cultural identity. It intensified the denominational identity

of a close-knit organizational connectionalism which was present at Charleston. It gave us a method and a motive for cooperation.

The Tennessee Tradition yielded an ecclesiastical identity resulting in a narrow sectarianism.

The first half of the 20th Century

A process of denominationalizing had begun among Southern Baptists before the dawn of the 20th century. A "Southern Baptist spirit" was developing around distinctly Southern Baptist institutions. The synthesis solidified around several institutions and movements in the 20th century.

From 1845, the nature and organization strengthened the synthesis. A comprehensive denominational structure, based on cooperation, encouraged devotion to and financial responsibility for diverse types of Christian ministry. The synthesis of the convention was missionary, not doctrinal, in nature.

The Foreign and Home Mission Boards symbolized the synthesis and became a bond of denominational loyalty.

Baptist colleges, though formed under state conventions, rather than the Southern Baptist Convention, nevertheless helped to create a Southern Baptist consciousness.

Southern Seminary, while organized outside the Southern Baptist Convention, was widely and correctly perceived as a Southern Baptist institution. It, and the five other Southern Baptist seminaries which followed in the 20th century, afforded Southern Baptists a theological educational enterprise.

The Women's Missionary Union, organized in 1888, underscored missions as the one sacred effort of the convention.

By 1891 the Southern Baptist Convention had its own Sunday School Board. No institution has done more to denominationalize and synthesize Southern Baptists. The SSB has provided a common literature, challenged our educational programs to set common standards of excellence and stressed the common task of evangelism. While unifying us, it has not uniformed us; no organization can or should do that.

Formed in 1917, the Executive Committee has become the administrative and organizational linchpin of the SBC. It has been of enormous value in coordinating a mushrooming denomination.

"The Baptist Faith and Message of 1925" was a kind of Southern Baptist Elizabethan Settlement, a theological statement broad enough to include all Southern Baptists and narrow enough to affirm the Christian fundamentals. This part of the Southern Baptist synthesis has come under attack in recent years. It is now accused by some critics of being too broad and not strict enough.

The Cooperative Program became the financial synthesis of Southern Baptists. It is the lifeline of the Southern Baptist way for doing the gospel. Without its development in 1925, the Southern Baptist Convention would today be a different people.

The Southern Baptist synthesis: its stresses

Since World War II, and particularly in the last two decades, phenomenal stress has been placed on the Southern Baptist synthesis.

Cultural stress has been partially due to the geographical expansion of Southern Baptists. Until World War II, the geographical base of the SBC remained fairly constant, centered in the Southeast, South, and Southwest. Between 1845 and 1942 only six additional states were added to the original 14 state conventions affiliated with the SBC. Today we have 34 state conventions and we have churches in all 50 states of the Republic.

Two forces, migration and a continuing emphasis on evangelism have created this new geographical distribution. But the expansion has placed pressure on the "Southernness" of Southern Baptist life. Geographical expansion has inevitably produced a growing cultural pluralism in the convention.

A second stress point is denominational loyalty. Southern Baptists, stayed a country mile away from the organized ecumenical movement of the 20th century. And yet some Southern Baptists who would have been the sharpest critics of that kind of ecumenism are right in the middle of a new fundamentalist ecumenism. Encouraged by the boom of the electronic church, and stimulated by the activity of para-church groups such as the Moral Majority, this new non-denominationalism has made unbelievable inroads into Southern Baptist life.

The ecumenical threat to Southern Baptist denominational loyalty does not come from the left; it comes from the right. Some Southern Baptists have more loyalty to non-Southern Baptist seminaries, non-Southern Baptist agencies and non-Southern Baptist movements, than they do to the denominational enterprise.

And this allegiance manifests another stress point, and that is financial. Statistics on the Cooperative Program have continued to look good. What these statistics do not demonstrate, however, is how much Southern Baptist money is being siphoned off from the Cooperative Program and channelled to non-denominational causes.

The Southern Baptist synthesis: its future

Is the synthesis breaking up? No, not breaking up; cracking, yes. But maybe better, it is reshaping. Some of the elements is the synthesis needed to be cracked. Our regionalism and our racism had to go if Southern Baptists were to be true to the gospel they proclaimed.

We came from sophisticated cities like Charleston and from rustic crossroads like Sandy Creek. We came educated and uneducated. We came with evangelism and we came with educational institutions. We came with the local church and the universal church. We came with Calvinistic theology, Arminian theology and with no theology. We came applauding confessional statements and we came deploring confessional statements. We came affirming culture and rebuking culture. But mostly, I think, we just came together. That togetherness is a marvel to those of us on the inside and a mystery to those on the outside. And it is the togetherness, the diversity, the synthesis, which we must receive and confess and forgive. Above all we must know it. Or there will be no hope for the denomination's future.

Shelby Association opposes redefinition

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP) — The executive board of the 118-church Shelby Baptist Association adopted without dissent a resolution opposing a proposed change in the constitution of the Southern Baptist Convention which would redefine membership.

Wayne Allen, pastor of East Park Baptist Church and immediate past moderator of the association, offered the resolution which said the proposed change of Article Three of the SBC Constitution is "unbaptistic, illogical and may indeed be injurious to our fellowship and world mission causes."

Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church and immediate past president of the SBC, also opposed the resolution, saying the proposed change "could be one of the most disruptive things which could occur in the convention."

The proposed redefinition of the method of qualifying messengers was approved by the Southern Baptist Executive Committee in February for recommendation to SBC messengers in June in Los Angeles.

Currently, each church "in friendly cooperation with and sympathetic with" the work of the convention is entitled to one messenger. Others, up to a total of 10, are qualified for each \$250 in contributions to the convention.

Language missions leadership to gather near Philadelphia

A Language Missions Leadership Conference will take place May 22-23 at the Baptist Indian Center near Philadelphia.

Though designed for language missionaries and language pastors, anyone interested in ministry to language groups is invited, according to Richard Alford, Mississippi Baptists' language missions consultant.

Sessions will include discussions on evangelism, applied missions, target group evangelism, internationalism in Jackson, Chicago Indian missions, and "Church Growth in Acts."

Devotionals will be brought by Calvin Gibson and Dolphus Henry.

The program begins Friday evening at 7 p.m., and concludes Saturday at 2:30 p.m. For further information, contact Alford at Box 530, Jackson, Miss. 39205, phone 968-3967.

Softball tourney will be in August

The 20th annual Mississippi Baptist Slowpitch Softball Tournament is set for August with men's and women's regionals Aug. 7-8, and the state playoffs Aug. 21-22. Top teams from each of eight regions will advance to the playoffs.

July 22 is the deadline for entry forms, entry fees and roster sheets to be signed by pastor and mailed to Tom Prather, state tourney director, Hinds-Madison Baptist Association, Box 4686, Jackson, Miss. 39216.

This is the third year in which regional tournaments. More than 170 teams participated in 1980.

Northwest pastors vote resolution

Mississippi's Northwest District Pastors' Conference voted May 11 a resolution expressing confidence in and appreciation for President Bailey Smith and other officers of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Noted Ken Bradley, president of the conference and pastor of Carey Chapel Baptist Church, Red Banks, "we believe it is time that we as pastors start supporting those officers who are elected each year by the majority of the messengers who attend these conventions."

Nonprofit postage hike

(Continued from page 1)
mending ways in which the specific cuts will be made.

Ford's committee is required by the House Budget Resolution to cut \$5.5 billion in 1982 spending and could choose to accept or reject the administration recommendation to cut the nonprofit mailing subsidy.

In the hearings, Edgar R. Trexler, representing Associated Church Press, American Jewish Press, Catholic Press Association and Evangelical Press Association, told the House Committee on Post Office and Civil Service that elimination of the phasing process "may well be a disaster."

Trexler, speaking for more than 750 publications with total circulation of approximately 70 million, said eliminating the phasing process would more than double postage costs of these nonprofit organizations.

Trexler's example of a 137 percent hike in the cost of mailing his own publication, The Lutheran, parallels the estimates made by editors of Southern Baptist state newspapers and agency publications.

"The religious press is willing to pay fair postal rates," Trexler asserted. But he feels "Congress is on the verge of breaking faith with the religious press by suddenly forcing religious publishers to assume an exorbitantly heavy postal increase."

Trexler cited a survey showing that 10 percent of religious publications would die if postage rates more than doubled and more than half would be forced to mail fewer copies.

Trexler further challenged the notion that the postal service should be self-supporting, saying that such a goal "is not as important as service to the general welfare."

Riches either serve or govern the possessor. — Horace

Life and hash are what you make it.



Poquette, associate minister of music and media at Jackson's First Baptist Church, will be workshop leader.

The program is designed for all media library directors and workers. It begins Monday, Aug. 3 at 5:30 p.m., and concludes Wednesday at noon.

For program information, contact the Mississippi Baptist Sunday School Department, Box 530, Jackson, Miss. 39205. For reservations, write Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, Henderson Point, Pass Christian, Miss. 39571. Include a deposit of \$15 per person.

Auchmuty challenging Committee on Boards

By Dan Martin

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)—James A. Auchmuty, Jr., is challenging the Southern Baptist Convention committee on boards for its failure to renominate him for a second term as a trustee of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Auchmuty, pastor of Shades Crest Baptist Church in suburban Birmingham, served one four-year term as a BSSB trustee, but was not renominated for a second term when the committee on boards met in Nashville March 23-24, even though messengers to the 1980 SBC in St. Louis recommended second terms for trustees who had "served well" during first terms.

The pastor, who also is national alumni president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, will publicly contest the report of the committee on boards when it is presented to the 1981 annual meeting in Los Angeles. He also is planning to challenge the "function and procedure" of the committee.

Auchmuty, who said he is "outraged" by the sequence of events, which led to his being "bumped" from the Sunday School Board, added: "I have been labeled both a heretic and a liar. In a reversal of the age-old maxim that a person is presumed innocent until proven guilty, I have had to, in fact, prove my innocence."

Auchmuty said he received a letter from E. P. Wallen, pastor of Vineland Park Baptist Church in Hueytown, and one of two Alabama representatives on the committee on boards on Feb. 9, inquiring about Auchmuty's "view of the Bible."

The letter said Wallen and Perry Calvert, a Huntsville insurance agent, and the other Alabama member, were attempting to comply with Resolution 16 on doctrinal integrity passed at the 1980 St. Louis meeting "to ensure that our nominees to serve on the various boards are in agreement with the view of the Bible stated in the resolution," which said the Scriptures are infallible and without error.

Auchmuty responded that "individually and corporately, privately and publicly, I have affirmed the Baptist Faith and Message Statement of 1963," and added that Sunday School Board trustees "meeting in Nashville in regular session on Jan. 28, 1981, unanimously reaffirmed the aforementioned statement and its specific reference to Resolution 16. I

was present and voted."

Auchmuty says he called Wallen April 2 to inquire about the status of his renomination, and was told Wallen "made a personal, arbitrary decision not to recommend me for a second term in the interest of including others in leadership positions."

Fred Wolfe, pastor of Cottage Hill Baptist Church in Mobile, was nominated in Auchmuty's place. Wolfe was to have served on the 1980-1981 committee on committees from Texas, but resigned to return to Alabama before he served. The Mobile pastor has been named as one of the Alabama representatives on the 1981 committee on committees.

In a letter to the committee on boards members April 17, Auchmuty raised questions as to whether his letter to Wallen had been available to the committee when it deliberated his case. He included a copy of the correspondence to each member.

Wallen then wrote on April 24 to the members of the committee, saying the decision not to renominate Auchmuty "was not arbitrary. Rather it was and is our considered opinion that he is not supportive of the admonishment stated in Resolution 16 on doctrinal integrity."

Wallen also claims in his letter that "Auchmuty authored articles appearing in the Alabama Baptist which, in my opinion, clearly contradict his implied claim to support, in full, Resolution 16."

The Hueytown pastor also wrote Auchmuty "failed to mention that he hosted a meeting of 'The Friends of Missions' headed by Dr. Cecil Sherman of North Carolina," whom Wallen said "has publicly declared that he does not believe in an inerrant and infallible Bible."

Auchmuty, in a letter to the committee on May 4, said the first article he wrote for the Alabama Baptist appeared in 1974, and the last "on September 11, 1980. If these articles are the determining factor, then I was a marked man on his (Wallen's) hit list at least five months and maybe as long as seven years prior to the date of his query and six months before the committee meeting. . . . It would not have mattered what I said. . . ."

In the same letter, he asked if meeting with Sherman "makes me any more his theological twin or clone than it made Bailey Smith, who also had a

meeting" with Sherman. "I insist on being judged on my own beliefs and statements and on evidence germane to the central issue."

He has sent copies of all the articles in question as well as other materials to Claude Kirkpatrick, chairman of the committee on boards, asking him to "implement with all deliberate speed the appellate process that will rectify the situation," and suggesting that "at a minimum . . . a proper forum be assembled at which all the evidence be presented and reviewed. If nothing more, such a meeting will affirm both my personal integrity as well as that of the committee."

Auchmuty, however, is pessimistic about whether he can receive redress from the committee because he says the committee will not meet again after the March meeting. Procedures adopted at the meeting, he says, "tie the hands" of the six-person subcommittee which will meet at 9 p.m. Sunday, June 7.

Both Auchmuty and Kirkpatrick agree the only items to be handled by the small group will be nominating replacements for persons who have either died or moved since the report was made.

"I have tried to work within the system only to discover there is none," Auchmuty said. "The only thing to do is to go directly (to the convention); if they want a fight, they are going to have one."

"I think it is grossly unfair when this kind of unfairness is exposed and there is no redress. I was tried and found impure without a hearing," he said, adding that the report of the committee on boards will be challenged and "the unfairness of the whole procedure will be exposed."

He did not say, however, who will lead the challenge.

He has been supported by the church of which he has been pastor nine years, and by staffers at the church. The congregation, on May 6, unanimously adopted a resolution affirming Auchmuty's doctrinal integrity and Christian character and called on the committee to make a "public statement . . . to correct any erroneous impression as to the doctrinal position" of the pastor.

Auchmuty said he is working with others to prepare materials for a bylaw standardizing committee procedures to "guarantee fairness to everybody concerned and continuity from year to year."

Wallen says Auchmuty action 'not personal'

HUEYTOWN, Ala. (BP)—The decision not to renominate James A. Auchmuty Jr., to the Baptist Sunday School Board was not personal, but was doctrinal, says a Hueytown pastor.

E. P. Wallen, pastor of Vineland Park Baptist Church, was one of the two Alabama representatives on the 1980-81 Southern Baptist Convention committee on boards which did not reappoint Auchmuty, pastor of Shades Crest Baptist Church in suburban Birmingham, to a second four-year term on the BSSB.

Wallen said: "This is not a personal vendetta against Dr. Auchmuty. I do not know him. I have never met him face to face. We have a doctrinal difference."

Wallen said he sent a questionnaire to prospective nominees, including those eligible for renomination, asking for "his or her view of the Bible," in reference to a strong resolution on doctrinal integrity, adopted at the 1980 SBC in St. Louis.

In his response, Auchmuty said he "individually and corporately, privately and publicly" affirms the Baptist Faith and Message statement of 1963, which includes a section proclaiming the Bible has "truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter."

Wallen said: "We did not feel he had given us a clear-cut answer to our specific question. My position on the matter is simple. I do not believe someone saying they believe the Baptist Faith and Message statement clarifies their position on the scriptures. It has been interpreted to mean whatever who is using it wants it to mean."

They Hueytown pastor added he believes the Baptist Faith and Message statement should be redefined, and added he did not necessarily look for Auchmuty to use the terms "inerrant and infallible," but "did expect a commitment to scripture as the authoritative rule of everything we do. . . ."

He added he believes the "spirit of the (1980) convention was to get a commitment on (inerrant and infallible) scripture" and Resolution 16 was an effort to get nominees to boards of trustees who are "in total and absolute agreement with the resolution."

"It would have been inconsistent for us to have appointed someone not in total and absolute agreement with it," he said.

Perry Calvert, an insurance agent and chairman of the deacons at Whitesburg Baptist Church in Huntsville, and the other member of the committee on boards from Alabama, said: "I had no objections to Dr. Auchmuty based on his letter. It (the letter) satisfied me; I had no objection to him."

Calvert said Wallen objected to Auchmuty, and a compromise was effected, naming Fred Wolfe, pastor of Cottage Hill Baptist Church in Mobile, to the BSSB in place of Auchmuty.

"We (the Alabama delegation) had to be in agreement. Brother Wallen felt strongly, so I was happy to nominate Fred Wolfe as a compromise. If Brother Wallen had been in favor of renominating Auchmuty I would have gone along. It was not a big issue with me," Calvert said.

Wallen compromised on another candidate: J. Wayne Flynt, chairman of the history department at Auburn University and a former professor at Samford University, a Baptist-affiliated school in Birmingham.

"We were not satisfied with his answer doctrinally," Wallen said, but added Flynt was reappointed to the Historical Commission "because there is not a better historian in Alabama. And, anyway, they don't have that many employees."

Both Calvert and Wallen said they are "surprised" by the controversy.

"I had no idea this would be the mess it is," Calvert said. "I am extremely disappointed it has come to this. To me it is a four-year term and reappointment is not automatic. I am disappointed in Jim Auchmuty."

Wallen said he believes Auchmuty is the "point man for a movement . . . to discredit Adrian Rogers. . . . I feel like by attacking this committee, they are calling into question the integrity of Dr. Rogers. (Rogers, immediate past president of the SBC, appointed the committee on committees, which in turn nominated the committee on boards. Rogers is an inerrantist.)

"This system (of nominations) has always worked well in the past," Wallen said. "Why are they questioning it now?"

Family Enrichment Week has a bit more space

At this writing, space for 23 more families is available for the Family Enrichment Week scheduled for June 29-July 3 at Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, according to Frank Simmons, manager.

The enrollment figure already equals the total attendance of last year.

"Should First



Myers

Budd and Kathy Mathis, Baptist Church, Vicksburg, enlist three more families, they will occupy one whole floor of the "C" Unit," Simmons added.

Under the theme "Help For The

Family," Charles Myers, pastor, Alta Woods Baptist Church, Jackson, will be the worship leader for the week, and Buddy and Kathy Mathis, Pascagoula, will lead the music and conduct one of the conferences.

Among other personalities appearing on the program will be the Harold Bergens, Nashville; Billy Johnson, Hattiesburg; George and Margaret Lee, Columbia; Gordon H. Sansing, Pontotoc; Gerald Hasselman, Vicksburg; Mrs. Ken Jordan, Columbia; Annette Hitt, Jackson; James and Pat Travis, Jackson; Evelyn M. Burke, Jackson; and Kitty Brogan, Mary Ann Jacobs and Kathy Pace, all of Clinton.

Conferences and Bible study will be conducted for all age groups including pre-school children. Adult conference subjects will include: Communication in Marriage, How To Enjoy A Growing Christian Marriage, Couples Managing Conflicts, Positive Parenting, Family Worship, Solving Family Problems, and Christian Family Money Management.

Family Week is sponsored by the Christian Action Commission, J. Clark Hensley, executive director.

For reservations, write Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, Henderson Point, Pass Christian, Miss., 39571, enclosing \$15 per person deposit.

Partnership with the Rio de la Plata

Photo notes on Argentine Baptists

By Don McGregor



A shirt-sleeve executive is Ignacio Loreda, standing, the executive secretary of Argentine Baptists. Brooks Wester, pastor of First Church, Hattiesburg, and president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, sits second from Loreda's right.



Alberto Pizzicotti, standing left, represents the Rosario Association. He is the vice-president of the association and is retired. The president, Juan Carlos Ferrer, is a bi-vocational pastor. Pizzicotti, an accountant, once helped the Buenos Aires seminary in a financial emergency.



A group of seminary students in Buenos Aires gather during a break in classroom activity.



During a get-acquainted session Alfonso Olmedo, standing right, an Argentine pastor, translates for an associational representative. Earl Kelly, Mississippi Baptist executive secretary, sits at the end of the table.



A bit of Texas interest gets the attention of the editor as an Argentine looks for bargains at a house sale conducted by retiring missionaries Mr. and Mrs. John Connelly Hollingsworth. Hollingsworth and the editor were friends during Baylor University days. Another in the friendship circle was Judson Blair, son of a missionary to Argentina. Martin Blair Judson himself a missionary, now works at the Spanish Baptist Publishing House in El Paso.



The unfinished communications building at the seminary in Buenos Aires stands as a testimony of inflation.

Calhoun County is typical association: hard at work

The current emphasis on the Baptist Association in Southern Baptist life now is focused on defining the association as "churches in fellowship on mission in their own setting."

Marvin Bibb, director of missions for Calhoun County Baptist Association, compiled some of the ministries of the association's churches that help to explain what is meant by that definition above. Bibb notes that this listing is not exhaustive for the churches in Calhoun, but it reflects the types of ministries that are being performed in the typical Mississippi church.

Bibb provides training to church missions committees and offers ideas on request.

Antioch, James West, pastor: He preaches periodically at LIFT and at the Senior Adult Apartments in Bruce.

Bethany, Maxwell Price, pastor: The members of the church go to the Calhoun County Nursing Home for a monthly Sunday afternoon program.

Bruce First, Charles Nestor, pastor: Each Sunday morning the Sunday School lesson is taught at the Calhoun County Medical Facility. Nestor preaches periodically at the Senior Adult Apartments in Bruce.

Calhoun City, First, Anthony Kay, pastor: Services are held monthly at the Calhoun County Nursing Home on Tuesday evenings. The Sunday School lesson is taught there monthly by the pastor.

Calhoun City, Second, Edward Pendergrast, pastor: Services are held at Calhoun County Nursing Home each month on a Sunday morning. Each month on a Saturday afternoon the women of the church carry little gifts to the Home. Pendergrast teaches two classes of Bible a day at the private school.

Calvary, Robert Pelkey, pastor: He preaches periodically at the Senior Adult Apartments in Bruce.

Duncan Hill, Jimmy Horton, pastor: Services are held once a month on a Sunday morning at the Calhoun County Nursing Home.

Macedonia, Enoch Purvis, pastor: Services are held at the Calhoun County Nursing Home each month on a Thursday evening. The pastor is a regular bi-monthly preacher at the Senior Adult Apartments in Bruce, also.

Mt. Comfort, Barry Ward, pastor: Ward preaches periodically at the Senior Adult Apartments at Bruce. The choir joins him in that service when possible.

New Liberty, Clarence Cooper, pastor: Services are held at the Calhoun County Nursing Home on a Sunday afternoon quarterly.

New Providence, J. T. Busby, pastor: Services are held at the Calhoun County Nursing Home each month.

Pittsboro, Jeff Gilder, pastor: The pastor preaches and counsels on a weekly basis at the Satellite Penitentiary. Winfred Brasher, a retired pastor and member of Pittsboro Church, takes a group of children to sing and he preaches each fifth Sunday morning at the Calhoun County Nursing Home. Brasher also preaches periodically at the Senior Adult Apartments in Bruce.

Rocky Mount, Jim Jeffreys, pastor: Jeffreys teaches two classes of Bible each day in the public school in Calhoun City.

Schoona Valley, Artis Tutor, pastor: Services are held at the Nursing Home in Water Valley on a Sunday afternoon each month.

Turkey Creek, Sam Higdon, pastor: The church goes to the Nursing Home in Water Valley on a Sunday afternoon each quarter.

Vardaman, First, Lowell Johnson, pastor: Johnson chooses a person or family to help each quarter of the year.

DRAMA LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE at RIDGECREST
June 27-July 3, 1981

The Baptist Record

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Editorials

The Southern Baptist Convention . . .

May it be a monument to prayer

May 24 has been established as a special day of prayer for the Southern Baptist Convention. First Vice-president Jack Taylor of Fort Worth, who hopes this will be the most prayed-for convention in history, has made this designation.

Certainly, under any circumstances, it would be well to be in communication with the Lord about the sessions of the Southern Baptist Convention. Few people seem to realize the seriousness and the importance of the convention gatherings. Many seem to look on the convention as a time for fellowship and for some interesting political maneuvering. The first, however, is simply a welcomed side benefit to attending the conventions. The second has become a regular but unnecessary aspect of the conventions themselves.

Southern Baptists carry on missions operations all over the world, and this is serious business. It is serious enough to spend a great deal of time in finding inspiration and direction from the Lord. Southern Baptists also staff and

operate a number of institutions and agencies that are almost all in some respect missions support endeavors. These require prayer. The conventions are the times that these efforts are dealt with. This is the main function of a convention. Otherwise there would be no need to have one.

Most of the messengers are outside when these matters are being considered, but that is the reason they are there. Messengers pack the halls to vote on controversial issues when someone is trying to bend the convention to his own particular viewpoint and almost desert the meeting area when reports are going on, but the reports and the consideration of a budget are the reason they are there.

Conventions adopt a budget, hear reports from those who have made use of the budget funds, and elect trustees to monitor the affairs of the agencies and institutions for which the budget funds are provided.

And these are important . . . very important. There could not be too much prayer.

Always it seems there is someone or a group of people who wants to mold the convention into something of their own conceiving. This year there are two such groups. The visible leader of one group is Paul Pressler, the Houston, Texas, judge, who wants the convention to go in one direction. The leader of the other is Asheville, N.C., pastor Cecil Sherman, who wants it to go in another direction. Each will be attempting to sway as many people as possible.

Surely each messenger will want to pray as to what his response will be, or whether he should respond to either effort.

For awhile there was hope that this might be a calm convention, but that hope seems to have vanished. Surely this convention might need to be the most prayed-for convention in history.

May 24 has been set aside as the day. It is hoped that there will be a nationwide concert of prayer on that day. It is a part of an organized effort to estab-

lish prayer support for the convention. Prayer coordinators have been named in 38 state convention areas.

The Mississippi coordinator is Bill Causey, pastor of Parkway Baptist Church in Jackson and immediate past president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. These coordinators will be involved in telephone prayer chains crossing the nation before the convention and in hosting continuous prayer vigils during the convention both at the headquarters hotel and at the convention center. They will be praying for state paper editors, state executive secretaries, state convention presidents, and SBC convention leaders among others. These are critical areas and each of the persons in the categories mentioned is in need and would welcome definite prayer in his behalf as he seeks to deal with convention issues.

When it is over, may this convention stand as a monument to the power of prayer and the blessings of the Lord because of it.

Associational Emphasis Week . . .

The oldest denominational organization

I have a biased viewpoint on associational missions work. My father was an associational director of missions in Arkansas for 22 years until he retired in 1970. Now, at 79 years of age, he lives on five acres west of Raymond and is a member of Raymond Baptist Church.

I never lived in Arkansas, but for a great part of my adult life my father served in this capacity. My children

grew up going to summer camp at Siloam Springs, Ark., to Vacation Bible Schools, and to Glorieta with their grandfather and grandmother. This was a rich heritage that my grandchildren will not be privileged to have because my work is not oriented in that direction.

My family has viewed associational missions work from the inside, and we have seen what an influence it can be

to mold a group of churches into a positive movement forward and what it can mean to many small churches individually as the missions director works and helps with programs and problems.

We are in the midst of Associational Emphasis Week. It is May 18 to 24. Associational Emphasis Sunday is May 24.

The association is the oldest denominational organization. It has been a blessing to the work of the churches for more than 300 years. The first was organized in 1642 in England. May each church give thought to the work of its association and to the value of its ministry during this week and on Associational Emphasis Sunday May 24. —DTM

Letters To The Editor

Plea for reason

I hope you will give this letter space for two reasons. First, Euclid Street is located a half mile west of Disneyland and only 45 minutes south of the Los Angeles Convention Center. We are in a position to be helpful to all who travel our way, and we want to help where and when we can. The church and I have served this community for 19 years. We are proud of our church, our city, our California Angels, our Los Angeles Rams, our beaches, our weather, and our mission field. Sunday, June 7, we will have a special convention program at 10:30 a.m. The Oklahoma Singing Churchmen will provide the music, and Dr. James Landes, executive secretary of Texas Baptists, will preach.

Secondly, I have a deep concern about the atmosphere of the convention. We Southern Baptists tend to enjoy a heated debate, and I understand an issue or two in the upcoming convention could kindle discord. These controversial issues will attract a lot of attention from the secular press. The devil is eager for Christian people to fight among themselves, because he uses this as one of his most effective tools to dissuade the non-Christian community from becoming Christians. Keep in mind that we are meeting in one of the world's great mission fields. The image that we project during the convention will influence our work for many years. Let's remember that while the west may know about Southern Baptist, they do not understand us. What we say, how we say it, and how we present ourselves on and off the convention floor will have a lasting effect on this "Bold and Beautiful Mission Field."

Our church will have a Homecoming and 30th anniversary celebration on June 7, 8 and 9 of this year. We are seeking names and addresses of former members. Because our church is located next to an Air Force base, many former members now live in Mississippi. Would you be so kind as to put this in your state paper.

Don Beall, Pastor
Southside Baptist Church
1100 Asa Lee
Altus, Okla. 73521

Thanks from New York

Editor:
Thank you for your editorial in the March 5 issue which was entitled, "South Bronx . . . How Great the Need." It has served to open the eyes and hearts of many churches and people in Mississippi towards the overwhelming needs in this area of the country and to stimulate responses to the challenge to help. From subsequent articles in your paper and from notes in church bulletins which I receive from Mississippi, I see that some churches and associations are sending teams of workers to the Bronx this spring to do what you can to help. In addition, I am sure that the Lord used the editorial to motivate greater giving for Home Missions work through the Annie Armstrong Offering, which helps to provide such continuing assistance both to the Metropolitan New York Baptist Association and to the Baptist Convention of New York.

As pastor for the past six years of one of those suburban churches which you mentioned and as a former pastor in Mississippi before that (at Goodwater, Magee; First, Leakesville; and Handsboro, Gulfport), I am excited about the possibilities of reaching the millions here for Christ if we can just join together in prayer and cooperative effort! My church is located about 75 miles north of New York City, up the Hudson River; but we are very much involved in the work of the city and the suburb. We are active in the ministries of the state convention and of the association, while at the same time trying to give faithful witness to the 200,000 people within our own county. Because of the international corporation located here, we have neighbors from all over the world and of all races and religions. Compared with the churches of the city, we are large. But even at that, our resident membership is still less than 100. And the needs are so great!

Ours and other churches have been blessed by the interest and ministries of the churches of the South. We cannot

Southern California and Euclid Street Baptist Church look forward to your visit.

Bryan Crow, Pastor
Euclid Street Baptist Church
Anaheim, Calif.

Altus homecoming

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Ours and other churches have been blessed by the interest and ministries of the churches of the South. We cannot

measure the encouragement we have received from student summer missionaries from your campuses and from missions teams and youth choirs from Pascagoula, Water Valley, Columbus, Jackson, and scores of other places. Because of your visit to the Bronx and your editorial, Brother McGregor, I am sure that this interest will abound. Praise the Lord!

Wesley G. Ellis, pastor
Vassar Road Baptist Church
32 Vassar Road
Poughkeepsie, N.Y. 12603

Thank you. — Editor

The Bratcher statements

Editor:
Congratulations on your editorial in the May 7 issue, "Witness Unto Him, We Must Do It Together." All of this controversy over inerrancy is inspired, advocated, and promoted by Satan himself, who will stop at nothing to hinder Southern Baptists' Bold Mission Thrust.

Certainly Robert Bratcher made a mistake when he allowed himself to be tempted into making intemperate statements about his beliefs concerning the Bible — but he was absolutely correct in what he said. To place the Bible in the position of claiming inerrancy for it is to idolize it and I worship only One God.

Now, if you say that the message that the Bible gives us, the Word — the person of the Lord Jesus — is infallible, I say, "amen!"; but not the printer paper that has been altered, revised, and erroneously translated for centuries. And don't give me that "cop-out" about the original autographs. There have been none for 1,600 years; and I believe that if we needed a written, inerrant message, God would have preserved it for us. If you wish to see the inerrant Word, look at Jesus. He is the only One I know.

You can get an incomplete picture of Him through Bible study; but the only way to see Him completely is not through the eyes, it is through the heart.

Robert Bratcher has apologized for being intemperate but some distinguished Southern Baptists are guilty of being used by Satan to "goad" him into intemperance. I know he will continue to say what he believes; he'll just be more careful of how he says it.

I know, too, that the Baptist Record will use its influence to try to quiet this controversy and if you think this letter will add coals to the fire, please don't print it. I just appreciate the way you handled this.

Andy Rainey
Gulfport

Sunday voting

Editor:
A bill known as HR 7928 was introduced in the U. S. House of Representatives, and it seeks to change our national election day from Tues-

day to Sunday for a trial period of six years. The motive for doing so, they say, is to solve the problem of the low voter turn out.

I am concerned that Sunday is at stake in our modern world. Because many are out for a wide-open Sabbath, it is getting harder to keep a semblance of reverence on Sunday. Selfish interests seek to destroy our observance of "The Lord's Day."

I respect every person's right to his own opinion, but we do not need this legislation.

Sunday is a holy day and not a holiday or election day.

Lillian Johnson
Jackson

Baptist documents

Editor:
One of the most keenly felt responsibilities of the Serials Division of Fleming Library, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, is its role as a repository for Baptist documents and data. In order to obtain a complete collection, we are requesting all the associations of your readership to place us on their annual minutes mailing list. If each association could send us just one copy of their minutes each year, future generations of Baptists will be able to get a complete picture of Baptist life from our files. Please send the minutes to:

Serials Division
Fleming Library
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary
P.O. Box 22,000
2E
Fort Worth, Texas 76120

Thank you for our efforts to preserve the records of our denomination by supplying your annual minutes.

Myrtle Garrett
Serials Librarian

BE MERCIFUL
UNTO US, AND
BLESS US; AND
CAUSE HIS FACE
TO SHINE UPON
US; THAT THY
WAY MAY BE
KNOWN UPON
EARTH, THY
SAVING HEALTH
AMONG ALL
NATIONS.
—PSALM 67:1,2

Places And Places

Ebenezer (Amite), age 175

"The members of Ebenezer Baptist Church, Liberty, Miss., request your presence at the celebration of our 175th anniversary of its founding. Sunday, May 10, 1981, at 10:30 a.m. Lunch will be served."

An artist's sketch of the ancient Amite County church decorated the invitation. Ebenezer was organized Saturday, May 9, 1806, sixth Baptist church in Mississippi Territory. Thomas Jefferson was U.S. president then, 11 years before Mississippi became a state. Ebenezer's delegates helped organize the Mississippi Baptist Association that fall. The church claims now to be the oldest Baptist church in the state in continuous existence in one location.

Sunday morning, May 10, W.D. and I left Clinton at 7 a. m. to attend that celebration under moss-draped oaks two miles from the Louisiana line. Except for a brief shock at finding ourselves locked outside our car and the keys inside, we had a marvelous time. (Thank you, you two men who shared your knowledge of how to break into cars!)

Boy Scouts directed traffic. People filled the beautiful little sanctuary and spilled over into the yellow-striped tent which was equipped with loudspeakers. We squeezed into the second row of pews. Enormous flower arrangements, gifts from friends and neighboring churches, stood between us and the speakers. Here and there long dresses and overalls copied the styles of "the old days." At noon, women in bonnets served barbecued meats, baked beans, and potato salad. A temporary kitchen had been set up in the back of the church.

The day was a bit windy and chilly, the sun won the battle with the clouds.

Mrs. James E. Allred, chairman of the 175th Anniversary committee, and all the church members had done a great job of getting ready. Donald Chance, deacon, announced that a booklet had been prepared which lists all names and dates on the graves in the Ebenezer cemetery, and that this would be available to anyone who would write him at Centerville, Miss. and send a minimum of \$5 (or more, for upkeep of the cemetery.)

Alvin Hall, pastor, welcomed the dozens of visitors. Among the guests was Mrs. Ed Causey. (Her husband was pastor at Ebenezer for 17 years before his death in 1978. I remember with pleasure his death in the spring of 1978. Then at Ebenezer he pointed out to me the building improvements made following a large bequest in 1977 from Mrs. Susie Stone Vignes.)

Richard Mayfield, music leader at Ebenezer, led in the singing of old favorites like "I Love To Tell The Story" and "When the Roll is Called Up Yonder."

Lester White read the history of the church. The eleven charter members bore the surnames Courtney, Cole, Curtis, Morgan, Perkins, Munford, Chance. The name, Ebenezer, means, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

During World War II an army camp was built in Centerville and its grounds encompassed the Ebenezer church area. The building was boarded up and the church met in homes until 1947, when the congregation bought its property back from the government. During this time H. J. McCool was the pastor.

I didn't attend the sesqui-centennial celebration in 1956, but I remember lots of publicity about it. Speakers were Brother J. L. Boyd and Dr. Chester L. Quarles and Governor J. P. Coleman. A wreath was placed on the grave of Richard Curtis, pastor of Salem, the first Baptist Church in Mississippi (organized 1798). Curtis is buried a mile or so from Ebenezer; he died in 1811 while visiting friends in that community. A monument in the cemetery bears his name.

Morning speakers May 10 were Earl Kelly, executive secretary, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and Odus Jackson, the only living former pastor of Ebenezer (he was there in 1961) and evangelist for the revival there last week.

Earl Kelly, who has a doctorate in Baptist history, recounted some events in the lives of such religious liberty champions as Roger Williams and Richard Curtis. He said that several years ago on a visit to Argentina he was invited by the chancellor of a Catholic university to speak to faculty and students. Afterward, a young man in the audience asked him, "How do you explain the difference between your country and ours? We have religion, but you are 50 years ahead of us."

Dr. Kelly's host, a rich man from the city, sprang to his feet and said, "Let me answer that. When our forefathers came to this country they were seeking wealth. That was their only interest. When his forefathers came to this country they were seeking freedom — freedom to worship God as they pleased, and they bled and gave their lives for that." He continued, "We still have tyranny that came from people who were seeking wealth, and we'll never become like them until someone cuts the heart out of our nation and infuses their heart of freedom into our bodies."

Odus Jackson recalled going with Howard Courtney, a retired preacher, to the grave of Ezra Courtney, first pastor of Ebenezer. "The old man knelt by the grave, weeping," he said, "and prayed, 'Thank you, God, for my freedom, and for those who established it all those years ago.'" Jackson emphasized, "We have a heritage that was bought with tears and sweat and blood and death. All we have to do is get in our cars and drive to church. Others bought that privilege for us, and paid for it."

(See page 6, for Ebenezer photos.)

There is plenty heavenly music for those who are tuned in.

Book Reviews

WRITE FOR THE RELIGION MARKET by John A. Moore (ETC Publications, 128 pp., \$9.95) John Allen Moore, a free lance religion writer for over 30 years, wrote this guide to writing for religious publications. Moore, a retired Southern Baptist missionary, was professor of theology in Switzerland and founded the European Baptist Press Service. Write for the Religion Market, chosen as a book club selection by Writer's Digest, is reviewed in the magazine's April issue. Moore's book is a revision of an earlier book published in Norwegian. It examines news and features writing as well as fiction.

Chapter titles are Would You Like To Be A Writer?, Begin With The Event, Writing The News Story, It Takes All Kinds, Interviews and Biography, The General Feature Article, An ABC of Feature Ideas, Literature

In A Hurry, What's Your Style?, Manuscript to Market. The book is slanted toward the beginning writer for the religion market, but any writer is apt to find in it some new pointers. The chapter listing ideas for features for instance, might even prove to be worth the price of the book. Copies may be ordered for \$9.95 from ETC Publications, P. O. Drawer 1627-A, Palm Springs, Calif. 92263.

MERCY, LORD! MY HUSBAND'S IN THE KITCHEN (AND OTHER EQUAL OPPORTUNITY CONVERSATIONS WITH GOD) by Toby Devens Schwartz (Doubleday, 196 pp., \$6.95) These forty poems are prayers — wise and witty conversations with God. One reviewer called the book "an absolute delight!" and said "Schwartz writes with the wonderful wit of Erma Bombeck combined with the crazy rhythm of Judith Viorst and the gentle faith of Marjorie Holmes."

enhanced by her own unique style." Another reviewer said that Schwartz has "a keen eye, a sensitive heart, and no pious schmalz." Both are right. This is an entertaining and heartwarming book that is sure to amuse and inspire any woman (and probably any man) who reads it.

Her poems take everyday topics such as the exercise class, her husband's cold, the cat, the laundry, fast food, a new job, having a baby. She talks them over with the Lord. Mr. Schwartz is a wife, mother, and freelance journalist who lives in Maryland. Born in Brooklyn, New York, she was a child model at age six. She has been an entertainer on television, a lecturer, teacher, and counselor. Now she is working on a novel about suburban homemakers and Washington politicians.

Wheeler Grove youths "set on fire"

(Continued from page 1)

in the schools, at Biggersville and Kossuth. Then one Sunday in October 43 young people broke the attendance record in Sunday School. In late December Pastor Larry Taylor and his wife and Gregg Thomas went with a group of young people to the state youth evangelism conference in Clinton. As Scott Benjamin said, the conference "set them on fire." On Youth Sunday in March an attendance goal of 51 youths was set, but 70 came. During Youth Week, seven young people made professions of faith.

School devotionals

At Kossuth High School, Ray Morton, senior, directed the devotional time, and Mike Bonds, senior, assisted him. (Ray recently surrendered publicly to the call to preach.)

The Kossuth principal, Larry Mitchell, told Ray that though he could not promote the devotional time idea, he could find a place for them to meet. A classroom proved too small, so the group moved to the cafeteria, gathering at 7:40 for 15 minutes before school opened. "We counted the attendance every day until it reached 306, and then we stopped counting," Ray said.

The attendance zoomed in January and February, after the evangelism conference and after pastors (representing different denominations) had been invited to bring special messages. Why did it suddenly shoot up? "Because we prayed about it," Ray said. At first they met three days a week, then five.

"I believe we help the students meet their needs, and that this time helps them to grow spiritually," Ray said. "For example, some of them are from broken homes and they say these devotional times help them better to face their problems."

Grammar school kids heard what the high school students were doing, so they asked for devotional time, too. Scott Benjamin, junior high student and Wheeler Grove member, began one for fourth, fifth, and sixth grades twice a week. The first day they met in a classroom, but "it was a little crowded with 160 in one room," Scott laughed. They had to move to a bigger place.

At Biggersville High, Mrs. Wilson Busby, wife of the principal, got the devotionals going, but the students took the leadership from there. Around 70 meet each morning at 7:45 for ten minutes, to hear teachers, preachers, and students speak, or to hear special music. They hope, said Jay Baker, junior, to begin a similar session for elementary school next fall. Jay, a new Christian, added, "You can just feel that Jesus is with you through the day if you start with Him in the morning."

Ed Settle said he believes that the school devotionals have helped the Wheeler Grove youth program to grow and made the young people more aware of their responsibility of witnessing. "The students go out and invite others to the devotional and then those present are often consequently enlisted in some church."

He recalled that the sudden death of a student at Kossuth School set the other students to thinking. Those who were not Christians sought out the Christians and asked how to be saved. "Ray Morton is one of those who has counseled often with his fellow students," the teacher said. "If he says the other students have problems and need spiritual help, he knows, for he has listened to them."

Mike Bonds, a Christian since he was nine, said, "I have grown during the past year. When I committed myself to the goal of enlisting 50 to our church youth program, at first I found it hard to speak up. Then I realized I was not having the faith to let the Lord do it. When I asked Him to help me witness, He did."

Jay Baker is one of those who made a profession of faith during Youth Week. "I was feeling alone," he said, "going through a teen-age phase. I guess you call it. I started talking to Ray and others. They helped me to understand I needed Christ, and I know now that Jesus really is the answer to that problem of feeling alone."

Children's Church

Youths also provide the leadership for Children's Church, begun a year ago. Gregg Thomas delivers the brief sermons, and the youths lead the other activities. Two teams of four take turns at directing Beginners' Church.

Tammie Wilson, 16, sophomore at McNairy Central, Selmer, Tenn., and member of Wheeler Grove Church since she was nine, tells flannelgraph stories for Beginners. Derinda Lucken, 16, junior at Kossuth, does the flannelgraph stories for older children. Both agree that though the children sometimes appear not to be listening, they do remember the stories.

"I believe we can influence these children's lives and that when they grow up they will remember something of what we said," Tammie said. And Derinda added, "A good church background is important in a child's life. When these children grow up, they will probably remain in the church. If they don't go to church now, no telling what they will grow up to be!"

Derinda, a Christian for three years, joined Wheeler Grove six months ago. A boy she knew invited her and she came and has missed only one Sunday since. "This church is special," she said. "People here care about you."

Before she went to youth evangelism

conference Derinda wanted to be an accountant. "But the conference changed that. I want to be a counselor with kids. I have been able to talk with Brother Gregg about my problems and I want to be able to help others in the same way." Tammie, who loves children, said she might consider a ministry with them as her career.

Jeff Bonds, 11th grader at Kossuth, is minister of music for Children's Church. Sometimes he leads the congregational singing on Sunday nights. "I like music," he said. "You can glorify God through it."

Tammie Allen, a senior at Biggersville who plans to enter Northeast Junior College to study psychology, teaches memory verses at Children's Church by singing them to tunes she makes up. She said she first saw this type thing done during a revival at South Corinth Church. Tammie has

been a Christian seven months. "The kids at Wheeler Grove were friendly and happy. I wasn't going to church anywhere. I realized I didn't have what they did, and that my life was not what I wanted it to be, and I realized that Christ could make the difference."

"To begin a youth ministry like ours anywhere," Thomas said, "you only need youths to be interested and a few adults to guide them and give them love and motivation."

"Young people," he said, "are going where the action is, either where sin and immorality are, or where Christian young people and activities are. My goal is to provide these young people with a good church alternative to the things of the world. At first, they may come to church out of curiosity. If they find something real, they will stay."

Baptist hits homosexual show

(Continued from page 1)

Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, takes issue with NBC's plans to focus on "such an immoral model of family life" and is calling on Southern Baptists and others to express their opinions on the proposed show to NBC.

"If the TV writers want to continue to live in a society strong enough to provide them their First Amendment freedoms, then they ought to stop assaulting the family which is one of the strongholds most necessary to the survival of this society," he said.

Hollis said Southern Baptists concerned about the show can write Richard Salant, vice chairman of the Board of the National Broadcasting Company Inc., Thirty Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10020.

The Bible Society of India says that Scripture distribution in 1980 reached 85.5 million, according to reports reaching the American Bible Society.



Gregg Thomas, associate pastor at Wheeler Grove, is a senior at Blue Mountain College. His father, Horace Thomas, is pastor at Shiloh (Alcorn) and was pastor at Wheeler Grove when Gregg was a baby, and at Trinity, Fulton, when Gregg was baptized at age 8. Gregg was graduated from Delta Junior College and attended MC. He has been minister of music and youth at Pricerville, Tupelo, and at North Winona Church.

High court repeats doctrine concerning church property

WASHINGTON (BP) — The U.S. Supreme Court reiterated the longstanding doctrine that hierarchical-type church bodies control the properties of local congregations, even when the latter secede from their denominations.

In a pair of cases involving Episcopal churches in New Jersey, the high court unanimously declined requests from local parishes to review lower court decisions holding that their properties belong to the mother denomination, the Protestant Episcopal Church. Both congregations had objected to the transfer of their properties to the denomination and withdrew from membership.

By rejecting the appeals, the high court reasserted the principle, first enunciated in 1872, that church bodies controlled by a hierarchy have property rights over local congregations. On several occasions, the court has decided other church property disputes, but in each case the contending parties were Presbyterian.

Although no church property dispute involving congregational-type churches or denominations had ever been argued or decided by the court, virtually all church-state experts agree that in such bodies local congregations control their own property.

In a separate church-state action, the Supreme Court also refused to hear a challenge by a Lutheran parochial school student to the Louisiana high

school athletic association policy barring athletes from participating in interscholastic competition for one year if they are recruited by high schools outside their primary school districts.

The complaint was lodged by a student at a Lutheran high school who was declared ineligible for a year because he transferred from one school district to another between his elementary and high school years in Lutheran schools.

Attorneys for the student-athlete argued that the transfer rule placed an undue burden on his free exercise of religion as guaranteed by the First Amendment.

They argued further that the student's constitutional rights to due process and equal protection of the law were violated.

The Philippines are experiencing a national awakening to the Scriptures but they face a crisis. There aren't enough Bibles. Recent reports from those islands say there are not enough Bibles in the stores and not enough Bibles in warehouses to meet the growing demand. The Philippine Bible Society is the first of the first eight inter-confessional Bibles for the Philippines. The first one is the Tagalog Version Bible. There are more than 70 languages and dialects in use among 7,000 islands.



Derinda Lucken, left, tells the flannelgraph story in Children's Church, and Tammie Wilson, right, uses the flannel board in Beginners' Church at Wheeler Grove. Tammie often uses stories of animals such as Winnie the Bear to act out Bible truths and to relate them to the children's lives.

Court upholds law to restrict abortions

WASHINGTON (BP) — States may restrict all abortions performed during the second trimester of pregnancies to accredited hospitals, the U.S. Supreme Court has held.

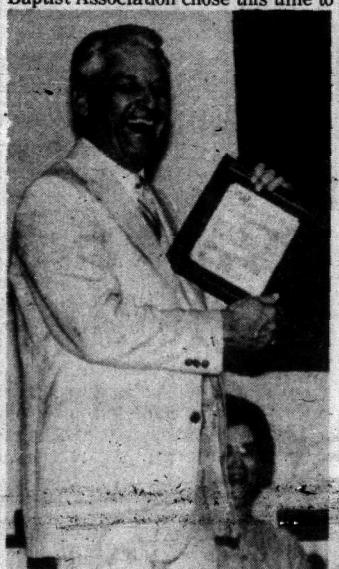
By a 6-3 margin, the high court upheld an Indiana law passed shortly after the court's landmark 1973 ruling that states may not forbid abortions outright.

The Indiana statute sought to minimize abortions performed within

the state with the hospital-only restriction. It contains other provisions banning saline abortions, restricting abortions in cases where the fetuses could be expected to live outside the womb, requiring a 24-hour waiting period before an abortion could be performed, and demanding parental consent for abortions on unmarried girls. Only the section restricting second-trimester abortions to hospitals was at stake in the high court test.

Rankin Association honors its director of missions

In connection with the 1981 Home Mission Study on Associational Missions, the churches of Rankin County Baptist Association chose this time to



J. C. Renfro

recognize their director of missions, J. C. Renfro.

The idea was born when Mrs. Barbara Bailey, WMU director of McLaurin Heights Baptist Church discussed plans with pastor Curtis Williams for the Home Mission Study. It was coordinated by the pastors and WMU directors of the 55 churches and the suspense was great in trying to keep it a secret, they said.

Many of the churches were represented on Sunday night for the "This Is Your Life, J. C. Renfro" which was emceed by Howard Benton, pastor of Eastside Baptist Church.

A former classmate and several friends shared tid-bits of some past experiences such as J. C. stuffing sheets in the bell and putting a car on the stage at Clarke College, but all spoke of his love and concern for people throughout his ministry.

The Renfroes were presented with gifts and a love offering at the close of the program, followed by a reception in the church.

A plaque presented read: "Working for God may not pay much, but the retirement is out of this world."



Kossuth High School students meet (voluntarily, of course) in the school cafeteria at 7:40 a. m. five days a week to hear 15-minute devotional talks by students or staff members of local churches. Attendance during the spring semester climbed to above 300.

New Baptist convention is organized in Costa Rica

By Annette Horton Herrington
SAN JOSE, Costa Rica (BP) — A new Baptist convention has been organized in San Jose among 17 churches, who boycotted the annual meeting of the Baptist Convention of Costa Rica in December.

Representatives from seven of the dissident churches organized the National Association of Baptist Churches in Costa Rica and named David Guevara Arguedas president. Guevara, pastor of the San Pedro Baptist Church, is a former convention president and was instrumental in encouraging the churches to form the new organization. The new association, he said, is "to promote fellowship among Baptists and provide a means of reaching missionary goals that one church alone would have difficulty achieving."

The association went on record in its organizational meeting "as maintaining a self-supporting status — using only national funds instead of becoming financially dependent on foreign capital from missionary entities."

In the past, Costa Rican Baptists have received heavy financial assistance from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

The new group, however, welcomed the participation of Southern Baptist missionaries in missions and church

development projects. Missionary Don Redmon is pastor of the Spanish-language Rohrmoser Church which is a charter member of the new association.

The convention has officially severed its relationship with missionaries although the missionaries continue to work with individual convention-related churches, as invited.

Official dialogue between convention leadership and the mission organization broke down in December after the convention requested that the mission organization send one of its couples home. The mission refused, saying there was no moral, doctrinal or financial reason for the couple to be sent home and that it has the responsibility for approving its own personnel, not the convention.

Later, the Southern Baptist mission decided to withhold all financial support for the convention.

The organizational meeting of the new association was held at the Baptist camp in San Rafael de Ojo de Agua, with some 150 persons attending. The installation service for officers that followed was characterized by Guevara as a "fiesta" — a spiritual party — in contrast to the tension characterizing convention assemblies of the last few years. Guevara said his

hope is that this move is "a return to basic Baptist principles and a new dawn for Baptist work in Costa Rica."

Sydney Goldfinch, chairman of the Southern Baptist mission, participated in the installation service, presenting the new leaders and offering a dedicatory prayer. Guevara delivered the sermon entitled, "Jealous for Healthy Doctrine," followed by testimonies by three founders of Baptist work in Costa Rica.

The national association also includes a regional association of eight Baptist churches in the Atlantic zone. This regional Baptist association is the first of its kind in Costa Rica and consists of both English language churches of Jamaican heritage and Spanish-speaking churches. Guevara hopes that soon the other churches will follow the example of the Atlantic zone and organize themselves into regional associations.

(Annette Horton Herrington is Southern Baptist missionary press representative for Costa Rica. She is a graduate of Mississippi College. Her husband, a Union, Miss., native was minister of music at several Mississippi churches.)

Scripture distribution in Spanish-speaking Latin America topped 95 million in 1980.

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Corresponding Secretary
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T.P. Bell
Corresponding Secretary
1893-1896

L.J. Van Ness
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Grady C. Colthen, President



Alvin Hall, present pastor of Ebenezer (Amite), and Mrs. James E. Allred, chairman of the 175th Anniversary Committee, directed preparations for the May 10 celebration



Mrs. Ed Causey, center, of Gloster, a guest at Ebenezer's celebration, gathered with others under a tent to hear musicians during the afternoon. Her husband, the late Ed Causey, was pastor at Ebenezer for 17 years. (Story on p. 4).



Pearl McElwee, 88, oldest member at Ebenezer was present for the church's 175th anniversary celebration.

Ebenezer reaches 175

(Photos by Anne McWilliams)



A marble shaft (in foreground) in the Ebenezer cemetery was set up in memory of Richard Curtis, who organized Salem Church near Natchez in 1798 and assisted in organizing the Mississippi Baptist Association in 1806. Curtis died on Oct. 28, 1811, while visiting near Ebenezer, and was buried at the house of a friend on Beaver Creek in Amite County.



Sherie Callender and Lynn Templeton, center, both age 10, modeled bonnets during dinner on the grounds.

Two sets of Martin twins are among Village seniors

Two sets of twins are among the graduates of W. P. Daniel High School, New Albany, who will formally complete their high school education and be awarded their diplomas on May 22.

They are among 13 seniors of The Baptist Children's Village who are living in homes and on campuses throughout the state.

The four are also members of the same natural family. They are Charlotte and Charlene Martin, both 19, and Willie and Fred Martin, both 18, and have been residents of the New Albany Group Home since its opening in February, 1972.

Both sets of twins came to The Village in August, 1969, with their two older sisters Ruby, who was a 1980 graduate of Mississippi State University and is now a public, and Sherry, who completed her college training and is now employed in Greenville.

All four young people have been active in First Baptist Church, New Albany, having traveled many hundreds of miles on choir tours, youth camps, and other activities.

Charlotte and Charlene have been active in school clubs, cheerleading, and lifeguarding during their high school careers.

Both Willie and Fred have served as officers in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and have distinguished themselves for their athletic abilities.

Fred Martin was named "All Little 10" in the football conference, and both he and Willie have been awarded football scholarships to attend Northeast Junior College.

The four young people plan to work this summer in New Albany, and begin attending Northeast Junior College in Booneville in September.



Charlene



Charlotte



Fred



Willie

Devotional

Ministry of encouragement

By Jeanette D. Kirby, Clinton
Hebrews 13:16

One of the couples in our church is involved in a ministry of encouragement. Because the husband has faced the trauma of a diagnosis of cancer and knows experientially the feelings of frustration, anxiety, and — at times — despair cancer patients face, he can help them in a way the average person cannot. Because he and his wife love the Lord and His people and are willing to be used in this special ministry, they have been able to give encouragement to people who were discouraged.

No one knows for certain who wrote the epistle to the Hebrews. About all that can be said about the author is that he had a Hebrew background and was writing for the benefit of Christians who had been converted from the Jewish faith. Even though we don't know who the author of the epistle was, he seems to have known someone who is well known in the New Testament. This fact is indicated in the text, for Hebrews 13:16 is descriptive of Barnabas.

Actually, Barnabas' real name was Joseph. He was a member of the church in Jerusalem and was highly regarded by his fellow members because of his services in their behalf. Joseph epitomized the ministry of encouragement to such a degree that he was given the nickname Barnabas, which identifies him as the one who encouraged.

Two examples of his encouragement are worth noting. First, Barnabas stood up for Saul when he tried to join the Jerusalem church (Acts 9:26-27). Second, Barnabas recognized that John Mark deserved a second chance after failing to complete the first mission tour (Acts 15:36-39). These two men who became valuable leaders in the church might well have been lost to Christian service had it not been for the encouragement Barnabas gave them.

God calls certain people to specific ministries, such as preaching, teaching, music, etc. Those whom He calls are people who have special gifts required in these areas of ministry. All of us, however, have abilities which can be used to meet needs in the lives of others. God has called each one of us to use our abilities in the ministry of encouragement.

Claud O'Shields dies in accident

RALEIGH, N. C. (BP) — Claud O'Shields, 66, communications consultant with the North Carolina Baptist State Convention, was killed in a one-car accident near Norfolk, Va., May 6.

O'Shields, who lived in Surf City, N.C., was eastern representative for the Radio and Television Commission from 1965 until his retirement in 1980, when he joined the staff as a part-time consultant.

O'Shields joined the state convention staff to promote the use of videotape by churches and associations. He was named chairman of the 1982 Joint Evangelistic Crusade mass media committee about nine months later.

He is survived by his wife, Ethel, 62, and four children.

Cliff Temple sends pastor to Pennsylvania

Cliff Temple Church, Natchez, sent its pastor Bill Dowdy to hold revival services at Tamaqua, Penn., May 3-8. Dowdy said, "The church felt this was an opportunity to participate directly in the Bold Mission Thrust." A church love offering paid travel expenses for the pastor and his wife to Pennsylvania.

Tamaqua is a small town in the foothills of the Pocono Mountains, population 9,000, with only one Southern Baptist Church. Services were begun in 1977 as a result of a Bible Study held in the home of Bob and Betty Bannan. Membership now is 29. Student summer missionaries and various churches and youth groups have helped by holding Bible clubs in the parks and backyards and doing survey work and door to door visitation. Dudley Penton is the pastor.

CLASSIFIED

FOR SALE: White Oak — PULPIT, LORD'S SUPPER TABLE, 3 PULPIT CHAIRS, sixteen 11 ft. cushioned PEWS, Red Oak cushioned PEWS — five 12 ft., two 15 ft. Good condition. Ebenezer Baptist Church, Rt. 2, Box E-5, Senatobia, MS 38668 (601) 562-8344.

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Newsbriefs In The World Of Religion

Washington (BP) — The U.S. Supreme Court has let stand a Minnesota ruling that parents' detention of their 21-year-old daughter in efforts to "deprogram" her from a religious cult did not constitute false imprisonment. In 1977, Susan Louise Peterson sued her parents, their minister and three other persons for false imprisonment and intentional infliction of emotional distress after being held captive for 16 days in an attempt to deprogram her from affiliation with a group called The Way Ministry.

London (EP) — Pastor Pyotr Rumachik, vice-president of the unregistered independent Baptist denomination (Evangelical Christians-Baptists) in the Soviet Union was sentenced on March 21 to five years at hard labor because of his work with that religious group, according to the East/West News Service. Pastor Rumachik has already previously served four terms of imprisonment in the USSR (a total of 11½ years).

Atakpame, Togo — The village chief in Homaga, Togo, capped a February baptism service for 68 new believers by granting Baptists land for a church there. Homaga, where Southern Baptist missionary Mike Key of Texas and Togolese pastor Benard Lave baptized the 68, is only one of four villages in the East Mono area where Baptists have begun work.

Richmond, Va. (BP) — The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board has released \$25,000 of general relief funds for victims of civil unrest in Lebanon. The board also forwarded \$10,000 from the Baptist World Alliance for repair of the Badaro Street Baptist Church in Beirut. Approximately 100 people began sleeping in the church basement to escape violent shelling in the eastern Christian section of Beirut after severe fighting the first weekend in April.

Mars Hill (Winston): May 27-31; at 7:30 p.m. Wed-Sat; regular services on Sunday; E. C. Tucker, pastor, bringing the messages.

Liberty National has just opened the door for people who have had trouble getting life insurance.

Now Liberty National offers life insurance for people between the ages of 45 and 75 who may have difficulty buying life insurance because of health reasons. It's Liberty National's new Open Door Policy. Available for anyone not now in the hospital or terminally ill. It's permanent, non-cancellable protection for you and your family.

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Some Bible musical instruments

Music filled the air in Bible days. The stirring songs of Zion, Nebuchadnezzar's band, strings, brass and percussion instruments provided for court and temple ceremonies and the lonely shepherd.

Israel has issued three stamps featuring Biblical instruments — the trumpet, lyre, and cymbals.

See if you can identify these instruments:

1. Hung on willow trees by the Rivers of Babylon
2. Used to liven pilgrim processions
3. Moses ordered two silver ones
4. Music for drinking revelries
5. Miriam sang and danced with this instrument
6. David accompanied the Ark with this

—Louise Sheridan - Anderson
Biloxi

Answers:

1. Harps (Ps. 137:2) 2. Pipes (1 Sam. 10:5) 3. Trumpets (Num. 10:10) 4. Tabret (drum) (Isa. 5:12) 5. Timbrel (Tambourine) (II Sam. 6:5) 6. Cymbals (II Sam. 6:5)

Missionary News

Robert and Beverly Thomas, missionaries to Yemen, have arrived on the field to begin their first term of service (address: Box 8080, Ibb, Yemen).

Fred and Laura Dallas, missionaries to Spain, have arrived on the field to begin their first term of service (address: c/o Errol Simmons, Apartado 51, San Sebastian De Los Reyes, Madrid, Spain). The former Laura McCarty, she was born in Lubbock, Texas, and also lived in Oklahoma, Wyoming, New Mexico, Mississippi, and Louisiana while growing up.

Pastor's son dies in wreck

Kenneth David Jones was killed instantly recently when the pick up truck he was driving was involved in a collision with a county dump truck.

He was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Jones of Forest. Jones is pastor of the Ephesus Baptist Church in Scott County. David was a member of that church. He owned and operated a farm near Harpersville.

In addition to his parents, David is survived by a brother, Mark, of Stonewall and a sister, Carol Ann, a student at Clarke College.

He was the grandson of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Brogdon of Hillsboro and Mrs. and Mrs. Cecil Jones of Harpersville.

1st, Poplarville senior adults tour gardens

Senior adults of Poplarville, First Church, toured Palestinian Gardens in Lucedale on Friday, May 1. The gardens are an authentic scale model of the Holy Land at the time of Christ, set among a wide variety of trees, plants, and shrubs.

Sixty-five senior adults were treated to dinner at a fish camp on Saturday, May 2. A group of the adults presented a musical "Count On Us" at the local nursing home on Thursday, April 30, and again at the church on Sunday night, May 3. They were recognized for service and honored with a reception after the service. All these activities were in observance of Senior Adult Week.

Robert Barnes is pastor and Louis Nicolosi is minister of music and youth.

5 from state get degrees at Mid-America

Five Mississippi students were graduated from Mid-America Seminary, Memphis, Tenn. on May 14: Gary Weyland Digby (Caledonia), Edward Earl Prince (Hernando), and Gerald David Shook (Charleston) received the Master of Divinity degree. Jimmy Neil Buchanan (Phillip) and Paul D. Lovorn (Merigold) received the Diploma of Theology.

The World-wide Service budget of the United Bible Societies will top \$21 million this year, more than \$2 million dollars over 1980. Among the 366 major Scripture sharing projects and thousands of smaller ones made possible under the budget, are the shipment of paper to Warsaw for Bibles in Polish and the supply of 17 million local-language Scriptures to Java for Indonesia's "Year of Women" program.



Clarksdale dedicates building

Clarksdale Church on April 5 held a thanksgiving and praise service, as the church dedicated its building to the Lord. A part of the service was a note burning representing the April 1 payment in full of its construction and remodeling program in excess of \$520,000. Top photo, l to r, are Ralph Watts, church clerk; Sheard Shaw, vice chairman, council of deacons; and C. D. Edlin, deacon chairman.

Special guests were: Ramsey Pollard, former president of the Southern Baptist Convention; Earl Kelly, executive secretary of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board; and Doug Polk, minister of music, Whitehaven Church, Memphis, and a former minister of music and education at Clarksdale Church. Included in the day's activities were a covered dish dinner and special music in the afternoon by Doug and Marilyn Polk, the 4th, 5th and 6th grade choir, and Bill Durham. Bottom photo, left to right are Kelly; Pollard; L. B. Marion, the Clarksdale pastor; and Polk.

Southwestern presents diplomas

A record number of graduates received degrees May 15 from Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. President Russell H. Dilday, Jr., presented diplomas to 430 graduates during the 7 p.m. ceremonies at Travis Avenue Baptist Church.

Robert Craig, president of Union University in Jackson, Tenn., addressed the graduates.

Mississippians receiving degrees were: Master of Divinity — Claude Horace Blackwell, Meridian; Clarence Otis Herchenhahn, Jr., Hattiesburg; Jerry Donald Hooper, a former pastor in Hazlehurst; Dwight Ray Massengill, Rienzi; and Marc Louis Pendley, Caledonia; Master of Religious Education — William Paul Blanchard, Drew; Ernest Cawthra Brunson, Jackson; Hugh Thomas Dadds, native of Mississippi; Randy Lee McClellan, Tupelo; Gary Alan Ray, Southaven; Mary Jewel Smith, Houka; Paula Grace Smith, Carrollton; Charles Clower Treadway, Hollandale; Master of Church Music — Johnny Eugene Lewis, formerly of Mississippi.

Thursday, May 21, 1981

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 7

Homecomings

Friendship Church, Route 2, Brookhaven, plans to have the annual homecoming on May 31. Sunday school will begin at 10 a.m. with morning worship at 11. There will be an old-fashioned dinner on the ground. Speaker for morning and afternoon services will be a former pastor of the church, Ed A. Young, who is now retired and living at Hixon, Tenn. Harold L. Smith, music director of Friendship, will be in charge of the music. Wiley Reid is pastor.

County Line Church, Crystal Springs, will observe homecoming on May 31. Bob Mack, who began his pastorate with the church on March 8, will bring the message during the 11 a.m. service. Lunch will be served in the lower auditorium. Following lunch, a thirty-minute concert will be provided by "Heavenbound," a men's quartet from First Church, Crystal Springs.

Calvary Church of Pricedale, near Summit, will hold its third annual homecoming and memorial service Sunday, June 7. Howard L. McLeMore, a former pastor of the church, will preach at the 11 a.m. service. Mrs. Bobbie McLeMore will bring messages in song in both morning and afternoon services. Other participants in the afternoon program will be the Calvary Church Men's Octet, the Busby Family, and other church members. A covered dish luncheon will be served at noon, and the afternoon program will begin at 1:30. Ted Bostick is pastor. Verda McCullough and Estelle Gibbs are the homecoming committee.

Temple Church, Jackson, will celebrate homecoming day, Sunday, May 24. Homecoming day will feature former pastor Wayne Crenshaw and the Donn Kenyon Singers. Services will begin at 11 a.m., followed by lunch at the church, with an afternoon service of singing beginning at 1:30. Thomas Ayo is pastor.

Rock Hill Church, Rt. 2, Brandon, will hold homecoming day on Sunday, May 31. Sam Waggener will deliver the message at the morning service which will begin at 11. Lunch will be served at the church. Rickey Patrick, church music minister, will direct a special music program during the afternoon service. Jack Blackwell is the interim pastor.

Some men are like vinegar, the older they grow, the more sour they become.

New Hope Church, Franklin County, will hold homecoming day May 24. Eddie Hamilton, former pastor, will deliver the morning message. Dinner on the grounds will be followed by singing in the afternoon. "All money collected on this day will go toward the upkeep of the cemetery," said Paulette Mullins, member of the Cemetery Committee.

Arlington Church, Lincoln County, will celebrate homecoming on Sunday, May 31. A former pastor, David Carter, Graceville, Fla., will bring the message at the 11 a.m. service. Sunday School will begin at 10 a.m. Dinner will be served on the grounds, and a gospel singing will be held in the afternoon. The Taylor Echoes and also Harold Luther Smith will present special music. Johnny Place is pastor.

Heuck's Retreat Church, Brookhaven, has announced that its homecoming this year will be May 31, a fifth Sunday. Members expect to retire the indebtedness that day on the sanctuary. (Fifth Sunday offerings have been designated for the building fund.) Dinner will be served on the grounds. In the afternoon, a memorial service and program of music and singing will be held, with an offering taken for maintenance of the cemetery, states L. Powers.

Emmanuel Church, Jackson, Frank Mixon, pastor, will hold homecoming day on Sunday, May 24. Sunday School will begin at 9:45 a.m. and morning worship at 11 a.m. Lunch will be served at the church at 12 noon. During an afternoon of fellowship and singing, from 1:15 to 3:30, the Gospel Travelers will present special music.

Keep thy eyes wide open before marriage; and half shut afterward. — Thomas Fuller

The strongest man is the one who stands most alone. — Ibsen

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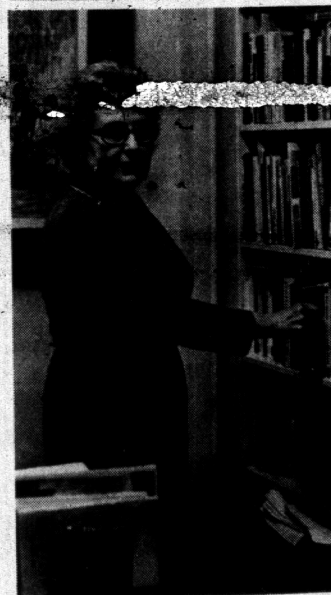
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Names In The News...



Sarah Peugh, member of First Baptist Church, Aberdeen, has been named by Mississippi Federation of Women's Clubs as Distinguished Volunteer.

was awarded the citation, a certificate and sterling silver eagle charm, during the MWFC state convention meeting in Jackson recently, and is now in competition for the national award to be given in June. The wife of W. S. Peugh, Sr., she has been involved in numerous projects. One for instance, was helping to organize a Dial-A-Prayer for Aberdeen. In First Church she has worked with the GA for 15 years and is leader of the Round Table book group in WMU.

John Stanley of Braxton has been granted a Raymond Bryan Brown Memorial Scholar Award by Southeastern Seminary for the 1981-82 academic year. Stanley, foster son of Earnest L. Wright of Braxton, is a graduate of Mississippi College. He has served with the Foreign Mission Board in Nairobi, Kenya, for the past two years and will enter Southeastern Seminary in the fall.

Clear Branch Church, Lincoln County, licensed **Frank Lewis**, April 26 to preach. On the same day the church ordained two deacons, **Burnell Brown** and **Henry Newman**.

Wiley Reid, pastor of Friendship Church, Brookhaven, has been named as pastor-advisor for the Baptist Student Union officers of the state.

W. Elmo Mercer, composer and arranger of church music, was concert guest April 25-26 at Longview Heights Church, Olive Branch. Earlier in April he was concert artist and guest of Baldwin, First Church. Mercer retired recently as senior editor at Benson Publishing Company and is now devoting full time to Christian music as arranger, composer, concert artist, banquet entertainer, and revival musician. He may be contacted at 301 Forrest Valley Dr., Nashville, TN 37209 or at telephone 615-991972.

James August Hover, 82, died April 3. He was the oldest deacon of Michael Memorial Church, Gulfport. He is survived by his wife, Dollye Holcomb Hover, three sons, two daughters, ten grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

Harry Vester Phillips, III, son of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Vester Phillips, Jr., Memphis, Tenn., has been named the recipient of the T. M. Hederman III Memorial Scholarship at Mississippi College, according to Van D. Quick, vice president for student personnel.

The Hederman Scholarship, established in 1964, is awarded annually to an outstanding male student of the incoming freshman class.

Phillips plans a career in medicine. Both of his parents are graduates of Mississippi College and a sister is currently enrolled. The Phillips family are members of Broadway Baptist Church, Memphis.

Phillips awarded annually to an outstanding male student of the incoming freshman class.



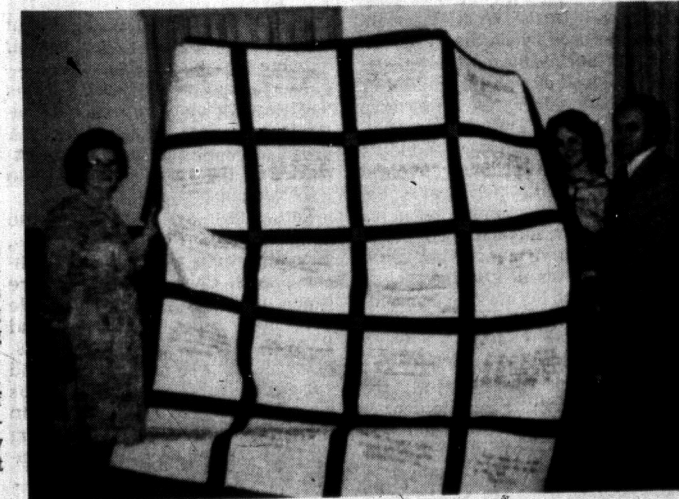
BECKER CHURCH presented **COYT M. SANDERS** a Certificate of Appreciation May 3 for his service as a deacon since 1944. Sanders has asked to be put on an inactive status due to ill health. "Over the last 37 years he has provided much able and wise leadership to his church," said the pastor, George Henley. The pastor, left, presented the certificate to Mr. and Mrs. Sanders, right.



SIX CHILDREN in **WAYSIDE CHURCH**, YALOBUSHA ASSOCIATION, scored excellent or better in Piano Teachers' Guild and in the District Keyboard Festival at First Church, Cleveland, earlier this year. Pictured are **GAY POLLAN**, **PAUL JONES**, **PAM JONES**, **DEANA TURNER**, and **JAMIE HAYES**. Not pictured, **TERRY FERGUSON**. Sunday night, May 10, these children performed on the piano for the Wayside congregation. Carl Hayes is the pastor.



ANNETTE STRONG, who is 60 months old, started Sunday School at Bolton Church on her third Sunday in this world. Since she was three weeks old, she has not missed being at Sunday School. She, of course, could not get there by herself. Her mother, Mrs. Judy Strong, has a perfect Sunday School attendance record for several years. Wayne Burkes is Bolton pastor.



MRS. ALLIE M. BUSBY, left, member of Bethany Church, Ackerman, recently presented to her pastor, **Jesse Duncan**, right, and his wife **Kathy**, center, a quilt she had made. Eighteen blocks are embroidered with Bible verses. One block is embroidered with the Duncans' names and date of their marriage. One block has an embroidered picture of the church.

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CATHY BARLOW was given a moving-away party on May 8 at the Family Life Center of Crystal Springs Church, Walthall County. She is the daughter of Jerry and Lynn Barlow. Her father, who has been pastor of Crystal Springs, has resigned in order to accept the pastorate of First Church, Franklinton, La.

Sponsors of the party were Cathy's Sunday School class and her Sunshine choir teachers, **Jessie Merle Harris** and **Mary Jane Stogner**. Gifts were presented to Cathy. Her mother was also a guest of honor.

Bible Book Series

Saul's success and failure

By Gordon H. Sansing, pastor
First, Pontotoc
1 Samuel 13:1-15:35

Israel and her new king had been counseled by Samuel to "reverence the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart." God Himself would be their guide and their security. We shall see that this counsel was not heeded. Chapters 13-15 bear witness to the breakdown of a strong personality, Saul. His impulsive temperament resulted in impatience which led to disobedience.

The rise and fall of King Saul is depicted in Chapter 13. The Philistines continued as a threat to Israel. This fact had been a major reason in Israel's request for a king. As king, Saul recruited an army to meet the Philistine challenge, but the army of Israel was feeble.

Saul had been instructed to wait seven days for Samuel at Gilgal. When Samuel did not show up on schedule, Saul assumed Samuel's role and offered a sacrifice. He believed the critical situation justified his actions. The result, however, was not good, as Samuel informed Saul that his kingdom would not be established. Saul's replacement would be "a man after God's own heart."

Jonathan, son of Saul, had a bold battle plan described in chapter 14 of which his father was unaware. Jonathan's surprising victory brought fear to the Philistine camp. Then Saul joined the battle and because Saul had sought God's help before joining the battle, they understood the victory belonged to God (14:18-23).

Prior to the battle Saul had placed his forces under an oath that required them to fast. This was unwise and resulted in a weakened army, a less than complete victory over the Philistines, sin against God by eating meat with blood in it, and Jonathan's violation of the oath because he knew nothing of it. Only the voice of the people saved Jonathan from death due to his breaking the fast.

Saul led Israel successfully in military campaigns. As a result, Israel was established as a military power, and Saul continued to build up his army.

1. God's command to Saul (15:2-3)
Samuel, as God's prophet, instructed Saul to listen to the words of the Lord with a purpose to obey. Saul is given another chance to justify his anointing as king by total obedience. The command of the Lord given

through Samuel to Saul related to destruction of the Amalekites. The Amalekites had unsuccessfully fought against Israel as Moses was leading them out of the Egyptian wilderness. Saul was to "utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not."

This is a part of the concept of war as a holy enterprise, directed not simply against the enemies of Israel but against the enemies of God. To "utterly destroy" means to consecrate the deity by destruction. In holy wars vows were made devoting everything to God in hope of victory. These vows usually required the destruction of everything possible. In this case all things and people were to be "devoted" to God and God's judgment upon the Amalekites.

2. Saul's contempt for God's Word (15:8-9)

Saul and his army went into battle and experienced victory. He was following God's command and it seemed. But he went only part of the way in obedience. In contempt of God's order, Saul spared Agag, king of the Amalekites, instead of slaying him. He also spared the "best of the sheep, oxen, fatlings, lambs, and all that was good." In so doing, not only did Saul disobey God, but he led the people to disobey also.

What Saul did destroy was the "vile and refuse." These were the things that were of no value and no good. Thus, Saul "devoted" to God only that which was worthless.

3. God's communication to Samuel (15:10-11)

God spoke to Samuel about Saul's disobedience. This word from God was to be passed on to Saul by the prophet. Reluctantly Samuel learned that the man whom he had anointed as ruler over Israel had been rejected by God. God's repenting here has to do with His change in intention for Saul. Saul had failed, and willful disobedience brings judgment.

Samuel was grieved over this word from God. In fact, he was angry at God for this judgment in Saul. In distress, Samuel prayed unto the Lord all night probably seeking a reversal of God's rejection of Saul. However, Samuel was prepared to confront Saul the next morning.

4. Samuel's confrontation with Saul (15:13-15)

As Samuel came to Saul, he was greeted as one from the Lord. Then Saul said, "I have performed the commandment of the Lord." Was Saul unaware of his disobedience? Did he

not realize his wrong? Had he so justified his action in his own mind that he felt he was right?

These questions probe our own lives for we have likely tried to justify wrong actions also. Saul claimed that he had obeyed God's word, when in fact he had not.

Samuel challenged Saul's statement based on what he heard. The best of animals had been spared for sacrifice; the rest had been devoted to God by destruction. Saul had disobeyed God's word.

His response to Samuel may be an effort to lay the blame on the people. But, as king, that blame could not be passed from him. The disobedience of God's word and responsibility for it rested squarely on Saul. As leader he could not blame the people for his wrongdoing. But that is the way of human nature it seems — blame everybody in sight, except yourself!

5. Samuel's condemnation of Saul (15:22-23)

Saul continued to try to blame the people, refusing to admit his disobedience. Then Samuel asked, "Does the Lord delight more in burnt offerings and sacrifices than in obedience?" The expected answer is "no." Obedience to God is the primary duty. Nothing pleases God more.

Saul was charged with "rebellion" and "stubbornness." These sins were in line with the worst of sins: witchcraft, iniquity, and idolatry. Because of Saul's disobedience in rejecting the word of the Lord, God rejected Saul from being king.

Obedience to his will is still that which pleases God. Jesus indicated that obedience was the expression of love for Him. He said, "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments." Saul failed at this point. Let us learn from his failure in order that we might faithfully serve God in obedience to His will.

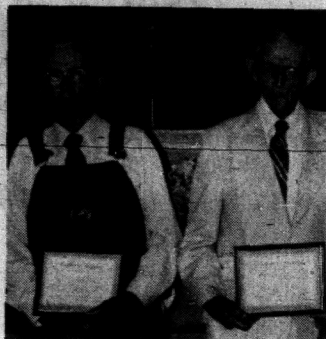
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Just for the Record



HARMONY CHURCH, UNION COUNTY, near New Albany observed Senior Adult Day May 3 with an old-fashioned Sunday. Many dressed in the attire of the 1920's, or earlier. Mike Smith is pastor.



HARMONY CHURCH, UNION COUNTY, honored its four active "80 and above" members on Senior Adult Day May 3, and presented each with a plaque of appreciation. Two of the four are pictured — Charlie Manning, left, and Malcolm Manning. The other two are Mrs. Cora Thomas and Mrs. Ida Archer.

New Zion Church, Lawrence County will observe Pastor Appreciation Day on Sunday, June 7. The pastor is Jimmy Yarbrough. Special services to recognize the pastor will begin at 1:30 in the afternoon following "dinner on the grounds." Several laymen who have served as deacons where Yarbrough has been pastor in past years will be on the program. They are: George Fortenberry, Jack McInnis, and W. J. Hardy of Jackson; and Jack Posey of Petal. The church is inviting members of churches where Yarbrough has served in previous years to be guests for this occasion.

Arlington Heights Church, Pascagoula has begun a Big A Bible Club at Warner Homes, a housing development. Mrs. Liz Lee and Mrs. Margie Biglane, who have been carrying this work forward, have reported several professions of faith. At least three have joined the church and asked for baptism.

Ricky Clark will begin work as minister of music and youth at Grace Memorial, Gulfport, on June 1.

James Whittington has resigned Gulf Gardens Church, Gulfport, to accept a pastorate in another state.

Northward Church, Gulf Coast has called Durwood Broughton as pastor. Broughton, a native of North Carolina, was graduated from East Carolina University and New Orleans Seminary. His wife is a native of Biloxi and a graduate of USM.

W. J. Abel has resigned as pastor of Waveland Church. John Wilson is the interim pastor.

Calvary Church, Yalobusha County, has a new pastor, Hinton Hardin, who went there from Rosedale.

First, Coffeeville has a new church secretary, Carolyn Sue McCormack.

Terry Tibble has resigned as pastor of Hopewell Church, Yalobusha County.

Richard Peeples is the new pastor of Pleasant Ridge Church, Sturgis, Okla. Peeples has pastored churches in Sunflower and Webster associations, as well as serving in several churches as minister of music and youth. He is married to the former Carolyn Robertson of Greenville. They have three daughters: Cindy, 5, Cathy, 3, and Christy, 2 months.

Shady Grove (Lincoln) has called Frank LaGrange as pastor.

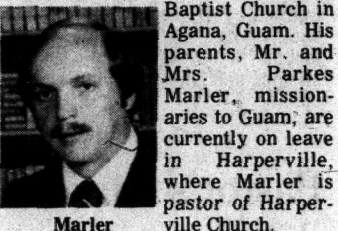
Westview Church, Jackson, will have Larry and Kathy Willett in concert, along with local talent of the church. Saturday evening, May 23, 7:30 p.m. Larry and Kathy will be in concert in the Sunday morning worship service at 10:55 a.m., May 24. Their ministry is interdenominational and interracial.

Commission Road Church, Gulf Coast Association, has begun a ministry for internationals. Three leaders have been trained to teach conversational English and this service will be the key to a diversified ministry. Other classes and programs will be added to meet needs of the students.

Jerry Barlow has announced his resignation from the pastorate of Crystal Springs Church, Walthall County, in order to accept the pastorate of First Church, Franklinton, La.

Cliff Temple Church, Natchez, has called Marcus Marler as minister of music and youth. Marler is a student at New Orleans Seminary and a graduate of Mississippi College.

He has had previous experience as minister of music and youth at First Church, Mt. Olive, and at Calvary Baptist Church in Agana, Guam. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Parkes Marler, missionaries to Guam, are currently on leave in Harpersville, where Marler is pastor of Harpersville Church.



Marler

Frank Leggett has resigned as pastor of Big Springs Church, Lincoln County.

Leonard Smith has resigned as pastor of Union Church, Brookhaven. He is retiring and will be available for supply preaching.

David Roberts has been called as pianist of Spring Hill Church, Copiah County.

Macedonia Church, Lincoln County, has called Richard Cowart as minister of music and his wife Betty as organist.

Uniform Lesson

Mediator of a new covenant

By Tom F. Rayburn, pastor,
First, Booneville
Hebrews 9:11-15, 24-28

Some features of the tabernacle are listed in the opening verses of Chapter 9. The first room is called the sanctuary or the holy place (Hebrews 9:2 and Exodus 26:33). This appears to be a type of the church. The table of shewbread, which compares to the Lord's Supper in the church was there. Also the holy place was lighted by the candle stick, seven lamps on a seven-armed stand, symbolical of the Bible which lights the church.

The second room called the holiest of all or the most holy of the holy of holies (Ex. 26:33 and Hebrews 9:2), was separated from the holy place by a heavy curtain called the veil. This room is a picture or symbol or type of heaven. Here was the ark of the covenant, a gold-covered chest which contained three items: a golden bowl of manna which spoke of God's care for His people; Aaron's rod by which he performed miracles and which reminded the people of God's dealing with them; the ten commandments written on stone tablets which spoke of God's rule over them (Hebrew 9:4).

There was also the golden altar of incense. Hebrews says that it was in the most holy place. Exodus 40:26 says that it was in the holy place. Wherever it was, it symbolized prayer. The incense of prayer brought together the holy place and the most holy place, which represents prayer between the church and heaven. As we pray in the church, the fragrance of our prayers reaches God in heaven.

Hebrews does not mention it, but around the holy place and most holy place was a large courtyard (Ex. 27:9-18). Perhaps this was a symbol of the world. Here the altar stood and on it sacrifices were made. These sacrifices would be replaced by the sacrifice of Jesus' own blood. Between the altar and the holy place was the laver. The priests cleansed themselves in the water of the laver. They cleansed themselves before entering the holy place. The laver and water represent baptism. Baptism is a picture of the lost being cleansed so that they can enter the church of God, the holy place, and heaven.

I. Christ and the tabernacle (9:11-15)
The tabernacle was a sanctuary of this world. The true tabernacle, not made with hands, is heaven. The high

priest entered once a year; Christ entered once for all. The high priest obtained annual redemption; Christ obtained eternal redemption. The high priest offered the blood of animals; Christ offered His own blood. The high priest's sacrifices cleansed the flesh; Christ's sacrifice cleansed the conscience. — Halley

V-11 Not of this building — The place where Christ ministers is not built with human means and decorated by human art. It is the work of God. His ministry was more perfect than that of the high priest who ministered in the tabernacle or temple built by human skill.

V-12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves — On the Day of Atonement, which was once a year, the high priest took with him into the most holy place: (1) The blood of a young bullock or calf. He offered this for his own sin (Lv. 16:3,11); (2) The blood of a goat. This was the sin-offering for others (Lv. 16:9,15). He sprinkled the blood on the mercy-seat, which is part of the ark, and sought the forgiveness of his own sins and the sins of the people. His Own Blood — In virtue of his own blood Jesus secured pardon for the people. He did not shed his blood for himself, for he was sinless. He poured out his blood for others. Consider . . . (1) Christ's suffering was wholly for others. The priest's offering was for himself and others. (2) The Jewish priest offered the blood of animals. Jesus offered His own. (3) The blood offered by the priest was a symbol. It could not take away sin. (4) Christ's blood is a real efficacy. It removes sin from the soul. Obtained eternal redemption — His redemption is not temporary. It is eternal. It makes salvation secure, and its effects extend into eternity. Here is the doctrine of the blood of Christ. It is the means of redemption. It atones for sins . . . and sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains. — Cowper

V-13 Bulls and goats and ashes — Numbers 19:9 states that the ashes of the heifer after it was burned should be kept "for a water of separation; it is a purification for sin." The ashes were to be carefully preserved, and being mixed with water, were sprinkled on those who were from any cause ceremonially impure. It seems that the heifer was considered as a sacrifice whose blood has been offered. There were so many laws about external purifications, such as contact with dead

bodies, that there should be some way they could be declared free from their uncleanness. It perhaps was a provision of convenience, and reminded all that purification was somehow connected with the shedding of blood. One wonders if there may have developed a split in the Jewish community called the "Bloodites and the Ashites." One would stress that the blood forgives. The other would emphasize that only the ashes could forgive. It sounds like modern day denominations.

V-14 The eternal spirit — There are many opinions about this statement. It is more likely that it means that the Holy Spirit enabled Christ to make His great sacrifice. Without spot — The animal of the Jewish sacrifice was to be without blemish. It was not to be lame, blind or sick. Christ Jesus is perfect. He made the greatest sacrifice of Himself. Purge The Conscience — The dread of death disturbs the conscience. Christ has removed that dread from the conscience. How you have the provision for peace, calmness, and quietness. To Serve The Living God — To serve Him in sincerity and truth, not in outward form. His friends obey Him, serve Him, and worship Him.

V-15 His is the Mediator — He stands between man and God. He undertakes the work of mediation and reconciliation. When we sin, the Father is ready to bring his wrath upon us. Christ intervenes, and asks the Father to forgive. He says, "I know how it is. I was a man. I know the feeling of temptation. I plead for them." The Father respects His Son. He forgives us because Christ made the great sacrifice for us.

II. The New Testament (9:24-28)
The New Covenant is here called the New Testament. A testament is a will, effective only after the death of its maker. The New Covenant is the will which Christ made for His heirs, which could not become effective, until by His death He had atoned for their sins. — Halley

V-26 Once for all . . . If his blood had no more efficacy than that of the blood of animals, which was repeated often, then it would have been necessary for Christ to die more often. But He died once for all. That means that it is not to be repeated again. It was a once-for-all sacrifice.

Life and Work Lesson

Jesus Christ Is With Us

By James L. Heflin, pastor
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Revelation 1:9-29

This week we begin an exciting study of selected passages in the Book of Revelation. There are only six lessons, so one can see that no extensive study of the book is possible. Perhaps these lessons will encourage you to study by the reader.

The nature of the Book of Revelation is extremely difficult to define. Three major observations can be made about its nature.

First, it is a book of prophecy, by its own declaration (1:3). Much of that prophecy is predictive in nature (1:19). Prophetic literature deals with the working out of God's great purposes in history. John writes with a clearly-revealed prophetic consciousness, which reaffirms the certainty of the cause of God, the victory of Christ, and the assurance that God's own people will stand with him and witness the defeat of Satan.

Second, the Book of Revelation has the character of an epistle, or letter (1:4-9). Like the letters of other writers in the New Testament, especially Paul, John's book contains warm greetings and a doxology. He also refers to readers as brothers, companions and fellow citizens of God's kingdom.

Third, Revelation is an apocalyptic book. Apocalyptic literature is filled with numerous visions, figures and symbols (beginning especially with 4:1). The symbols are often complicated, therefore difficult to interpret. In general, apocalyptic literature is filled with intense drama. Catastrophic and cataclysmic events are building to a time of crisis, a decisive moment — an end.

Unlike the other apocalyptic material of that era, there is no pessimism in John's writing. He writes with a certainty that the drama about to unfold will be under God's direct control and will move to the eventual vindication of God's purposes. That is the prophet's outlook on history.

These three streams converge in the Book of Revelation and flow to the great sea of God's eternal design for himself and his people: "They shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." (Rev. 21:3).

Through the month of June our lessons have the general title: "Revelation: Themes for Living." The first of

these, "Jesus Christ Is With Us," reaffirms one of Christ's own promises to his people. The Christians to whom John first wrote the words of this book lived under severe persecution and needed words of comfort.

I. Verified by God's messenger (1:1-2)

The opening verse of this great book declares that this is the revelation of Jesus Christ himself given to John by an angel (v. 1). The word "revelation" is "apocalypse" which means "something revealed, unveiled, or disclosed." God gave the revelation to John so that John could pass it on to all God's servants.

The contents of the revelation were "the things which must shortly come to pass." That statement placed some of the events of the book in the future. God soon would come to the rescue of his people. Catastrophic events would accompany Christ's coming to establish God's kingdom in final form.

God often sent his personal messenger to his spokesmen on earth. The angel appeared to John to give and signify, or verify, the message from God. The verb for "signify" literally means "to make known by some kind of sign."

John, then, witnessed the series of visions and recorded them as the very words of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ (v. 2).

II. Verified by Christ (1:9-16)

John lived in exile on the Isle of Patmos, located in the Aegean Sea west-southwest of Miletus. He was sent there as a prisoner of the Romans; therefore he knew personally about tribulation (v. 9). He was a partaker of trouble with his brothers in Christ but also of the kingdom and patience which belong to Jesus. While on Patmos, John had a startling vision.

It was on the Lord's Day and John was "in the spirit" — a reference to a spiritual exaltation. While caught up in his experience of worship, John heard a great voice behind him which sounded like a blast on a trumpet (v. 10). The voice instructed him to write down what he was about to see and send it to "the seven churches" (v. 11). They were the churches of Asia Minor.

The number seven occurs frequently in Revelation and is one of the keys to aid our understanding of the book. It signifies perfection or completion. The seven churches evidently represent all the churches of our Lord.

Upon hearing the voice, John turned and saw seven golden lampstands (v. 12). In the midst of the candlesticks stood "one like unto a son of man" (v. 13). It was the exalted Christ. He was clothed with the garments of a king — a robe which reached down to the foot, a mark of dignity, and a girdle (belt) which was wrapped around his breast.

The hair of the one John saw was a pure white color like that of snow, which spoke of holiness. His eyes were like a flame of fire (v. 14), which represented his penetrating vision. His feet looked like burnished brass. His voice resounded like the rushing of many waters (v. 15). His feet portrayed strength and stability; his voice was one of authority.

The celestial visitor held in his right hand seven stars. A sharp, two-edged sword proceeded out of his mouth. His face shined like the sun at its strongest (v. 16).

It was Christ himself who stood before John. All the superlatives John employed to describe him meant that the presence of Christ is a brilliance which lights the lives of men. Moreover, they speak of his power to control, protect and judge.

III. Compels worship

Like Isaiah of old (Isaiah 6:1-8) John was overwhelmed by the presence of the Almighty. He immediately fell at the feet of Jesus as though he were a dead man (v. 17). This theme of a powerful, triumphant Christ dominates the Book of Revelation (Ray Summers).

The person of Christ always awes us and inspires a reaction similar to that of John. Who feels worthy to do any more than fall at the feet of the Lord? His presence is glorious.

Then Jesus reached out and touched John. His first words were: "Fear not" (v. 17). Those were among his last words to those troubled and bewildered disciples before his crucifixion (John 14:27). In the presence of Christ we need not fear. He is the King.

Jesus continued with a declaration of his identity (vv. 17-18). He is the great "I am" (compare 1:8, 22:13 and Exodus 3:14). Christ is real. He is "the first and the last." Moreover, he is "the Living one." Yes, he was dead at one time. Death made a successful assault upon Jesus at the cross. But death could not defeat our Lord. He came back from the dead and now lives forever. As the conqueror of death he holds the keys (control) of death and of hell.